DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 474 368 FL 027 605

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TITLE Decreasing Anxiety and Frustration in the Spanish Language Classroom.

PUB DATE 2003-01-00

NOTE 129p.; Master of Arts Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and SkyLight Professional Development Field-Based Master's Program.

PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Reports - Research (143) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Action Research; Class Activities; Classroom Environment; *Communication Apprehension; Error Correction; Middle School Students; Middle Schools; Reading Aloud to Others; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; *Spanish; Speech Communication; Study Skills; *Teaching Methods; *Test Anxiety

IDENTIFIERS Frustration; Total Physical Response

ABSTRACT

This report describes instructional strategies to decrease anxiety and frustration in the Spanish classroom. Participants were five 7th grade Spanish classes in two suburban middle schools. Student interventions included a study skills guide; partner and group presentations, skits, and activities; and group oral reading. Teacher interventions included the use of total physical response, authentic correction, and creation of a nonthreatening classroom environment. Anxiety and frustration were documented through direct observations by teachers, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, and student questionnaires and interviews. Analysis of probable cause data was documented through a review of literature and methods of assessment by the researchers. Results indicated that several activities caused foreign language anxiety (oral communication, writing, and reading in the target language). Posttest data indicated a decrease in anxiety and frustration at both schools. Students were able to identify their own feelings of anxiety and frustration and gain self-confidence as they took risks in revealing themselves by speaking Spanish in the presence of other students and the teacher. Post-test, students showed less test anxiety, communication apprehension, and fear of negative evaluation in the classroom, and less anxiety and frustration in the area of oral communication, which had previously hindered their full acquisition of the language. (Contains 55 references.) (SM)

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FL FLTR 0018

ED 474 368

Decreasing Anxiety and Frustration in the Spanish Language Classroom

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight

Field-Based Masters Program

Chicago, Illinois

January, 2003

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ABSTRACT

This report describes instructional strategies to decrease anxiety and frustration in the Spanish classroom. The targeted population consisted of five seventh grade year long Spanish classes, in two middle schools, in middle class suburban communities, located 40 miles north of Chicago. The problem of anxiety and frustration was documented through direct observations by teachers in the Spanish classroom, assessments through the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986), and student questionnaires and interviews.

Analysis of probable cause data was documented through a review of literature and methods of assessment by the researchers. It was determined that the causes of foreign language anxiety can be found in a variety of activities such as oral communication, writing, and reading in the target language

In conclusion, posttest data indicated a successful decrease in anxiety and frustration at both schools A and school B. The posttest data indicated that the students were able to identify their own feelings of anxiety and frustration, and were able to gain self-confidence by their willingness to risks revealing themselves by speaking Spanish in the presence of other students, as well as the teacher. The students showed a lower degree of test anxiety, communication apprehension, and fear of negative evaluation in the classroom. The students of the seventh grade foreign language Spanish classrooms exhibited less anxiety and frustration after the intervention in the area of oral communication, which previously has hindered their full acquisition of the Spanish language.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted seventh grade foreign language Spanish classrooms exhibit anxiety and frustration in the area of oral communication, which hinders their full acquisition of the Spanish language. Evidence for the existence of the problem is found in assessments through the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986), student questionnaires and interviews in the Spanish classroom.

Immediate Problem Context

The two middle schools in focus, school A and school B, are both located approximately 40 miles north of Chicago, Illinois. The total school population of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of school A was 2,250 students; the total school population of seventh and eighth grades of school B was 697 students. The ethnic characteristics of school A included 75% White, 5% Black, 10% Hispanic, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, and .5% Native American. The ethnic characteristics of school B included 88% White, 2% Black, 6% Hispanic, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, and .5% Native American. Low-income students are described as being from a family that receives public aid, may live in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, may be supported in foster homes with public funds or may be eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches. The low-income level of both schools A and B was 8%. An attendance pattern of

100% would indicate that all the students attended school every day. The attendance pattern of school A was 96% and of school B was 95%. The student mobility rate is based on the number of students who enroll in or leave a school during the school year. Students are counted each time they transfer in or out of a school. The student mobility rate of school A was 19% and of school B was 9% (School Report Card, 2000).

The total number of staff by category of school A was 20 language arts teachers, 20 math teachers, 20 social studies teachers, 20 science teachers, nine physical education teachers, three health teachers, three technology teachers, five music teachers, three art teachers, two life skills teachers, two applied practical arts teachers, five Spanish teachers, three English as a second language/bilingual teachers, 23 special education teachers, five gifted and challenge teachers, three speech and language pathologists, seven psychologists and social workers, one hearing itinerant teacher, one computer teacher, one librarian, and one nurse (R. McCullumn, personal communication, August 13, 2001). The total number of staff by category of school B was six language arts teachers, six math teachers, six social studies teachers, six English teachers, six science teachers, three physical education teachers, one health teacher, two music teachers, one art teacher, two Spanish teachers, one English as a second language /bilingual teacher, three special education teachers, one hearing itinerate teacher, one speech and language pathologist, four psychologists and social workers, one librarian, and one nurse (S. Godek, personal communication, August 14, 2001).

The average years of teacher experience of schools A and B was nine years. The educational levels attained by certified staff of school A was 62% with a bachelor's degree, 38% with a

master's degree or higher degrees. The educational levels attained by certified staff of school B was 55% with a bachelor's degree and 45% with a master's degree or higher degrees.

The mission statement of school A was "to challenge each student everyday to be a life-long learner" (School Website, 2001). The mission statement of school B was "to provide each student with a nurturing environment in which they can achieve academic potential as life-long learners" (District Website, 2001).

The beginning level Spanish programs at both school A and school B used two different textbooks but covered identical concepts in the target language. The curricular topics included descriptions of people, places, and activities, asking and answering questions, using proper pronunciation, intonation, and inflection, appropriate verb usage and conjugations, reading, writing, and understanding sentences and phrases (Spanish Curriculum Guide, 2001) (District Website, 2001).

The district of school A consists of: two primary schools with one principal and one assistant principal each with grade levels pre-kindergarten through second, one elementary school with one principal and two assistant principals with grade levels second and third, one intermediate school with one principal and two assistant principals with grade levels fourth and fifth, and two middle schools with one principal and two assistant principals each with grade levels sixth through eighth. The district of school A had one superintendent and two assistant superintendents (District Brochure, 2001).

The district of school B consists of: four elementary schools with one principal and one assistant principal each with grade levels kindergarten through fourth, one intermediate school with one principal and one assistant principal with grade levels fifth and sixth, and one middle

school with one principal and one associate principal with grade levels seventh and eighth. The district of school B has one superintendent and one assistant superintendent (District Website, 2001).

The Surrounding Community

The populations of the major community (C1) and minor community (C2) that fed into school A were 28,834 people and 6,637 people respectively. The population of the community (C3) that fed into school B was 18,506 people. The median family income of C1 was $93,501, with a median age of 36 years. The median family income of C2 was $46,597, with a median age of 34 years. The median family income of C3 was $81,161, with a median age of 36 years. The ethnic characteristics of C1 were 90% White, 3% Black, 3% Hispanic, and 4% Other. The ethnic characteristics of C2 were 75% White, 5% Black, 15% Hispanic, and 5% Other. The ethnic characteristics of C3 were 97% White, 0% Black, 3% Hispanic, and 1% Other (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Community support for school A by C1 and C2 was shown through the passage of three referendums in the past 11 years, as well as through donations and partnerships with the district. These include the referendums of November 1990 for $14 million, November 1995 for $36 million, and November 2000 for $48 million, along with a grant from the state of Illinois for $15.2 million. School A also received donations in the form soccer balls for physical education classes, computer equipment, the climbing wall at the middle school, and books for the libraries. There were generous donations by a local business, as well as the collection of Campbell's soup labels and General Mills box tops for Education, which donate money for each item collected (K. Pollard, personal communication, August 14, 2001). Community support for school B was

shown through the passage of a referendum in April 1999 for $23 million. In addition, the district received several yearly donations from a local business, a philanthropy organization, as well as the collection of Campbell's soup labels and General Mills box tops for Education, which donate money for each item collected (L. Dalton, personal communication, August 15, 2001).

National Context of the Problem

The problem of foreign language anxiety and limited oral communication in Spanish classrooms has generated concern. There has been an influx of Spanish speakers in the United States that has set rationales for Spanish language instruction that deem it a necessity rather than a luxury to learn Spanish (Nugent, 2000).

According to the census, there were approximately 12,419,293 people living in the state of Illinois; of that population 1,530,262 were Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The term Hispanic refers to a person or group of people with an ancestry from a Spanish speaking country. The percentage of Hispanic residents in Illinois made up 12% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). At a national level, there were approximately 276,059,000 people living in the United States; of that population 32,832,000 were Hispanic. The percentage of Hispanic residents in the United States made up 12% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Not only does the ability to speak Spanish allow easier communication with the United States' diverse population, but it also provides a student with a broadened worldview and new perspectives. Learning the Spanish language offers insight to new social and cultural backgrounds beyond those experienced in one's own community and helps to build confidence (Nugent, 2000). "Foreign language study promotes understanding, tolerance, and respect for the cultural identities and values of others. This aids in dispelling ethnocentrism and supports the

placement of local communities within the framework of the global society" (Nugent, 2000, p. 35). When studying the Spanish language, one not only learns the language, but also begins to analyze and appreciate one's primary language. In Heny's 1994 study (as cited in Nugent, 2000) it was found that the study of the Spanish language promotes critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Learning the Spanish language not only helps one understand the surrounding cultures, but also helps further one's career by increasing opportunities in the workplace. Learning the Spanish language has academic, business, personal, recreational, and practical benefits (J. Gutke, personal communication, August 16, 2001). According to Blaz, (as cited by Nugent, 2000, p. 37) proficiency and success in the Spanish language are measured through communication by "knowing how, when, and why to say what to whom."

According to the 1996 study of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (as cited by Saito, Garza, & Horwitz, 1999) the essence of Spanish language anxiety is a threat to an individual's self-concept caused by the inherent limitation of communicating in an imperfectly mastered second language. There have been six sources of anxiety for Spanish language learning that have been identified, including personal and interpersonal dynamics, student belief about learning Spanish, teacher belief about instruction, interactions between the teacher and students, activities in the classroom, and assessment according to Young's 1991 study (as cited by Tse, 2000). Of the fore mentioned sources of anxiety, the one that was the most anxiety provoking was speaking or oral language production (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999). After semesters of learning, a vast number of students remain unable to achieve or master a moderate level of fluent, accurate communication skills due to a lack of exposure to a naturally occurring, spontaneous language that occurs in real life (Stringer, 1998).

The rapidly changing population throughout Illinois and the nation has increased the need for learning Spanish. In the Spanish classroom, communication continues to be a focal point of anxiety and frustration for the students. Though there are numerous benefits to studying Spanish, the students' frustration and anxiety levels through personal insecurities, sense of self-consciousness, and stress to perform or present in front of classmates, have hindered their communication skills.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the extent and degree of student anxiety in the foreign language classroom, a questionnaire (Appendix A), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and student interview (Appendix B) were administered as a pretest in January 2002.

In school A, of the 47 students in the two beginning level Spanish classes, 47 students participated in the study. In school B, of the 75 students in the three beginning level Spanish classes, 75 students participated in the study. All of the figures and tables are representative of the total number of students involved in the intervention.

The curricula of both school A and school B were very similar in content, teaching pace, and subject matter. Each curriculum included activities which permitted students to learn according to their individual learning styles and/or strengths. Learning activities such as pair work, seat work, skits, presentations, role-play, and oral practice were mandated by the text used by the schools. Oral practice, seat work, and pair work were used most often with periodic use of role-play, skits and presentations. Both of the individual schools' curriculums were already in existence prior to the research interventions. Because this was middle school level, the high schools mandated what text would be used in both school A and school B. The specific chapters to be covered during the school year were directed by the requirements of the high school and its pace for standard course completion.

The first tool for gathering evidence was the student questionnaire (Appendix A). This questionnaire was adapted from one used in an article entitled "An Investigation of Students' Perspectives on Anxiety and Speaking" (Young, 1990). The "agree" and "disagree" format was changed to some "yes" or "no" questions and check boxes which would apply, to be better understood by the subjects at the targeted grade level. Several "why" questions were included to coincide with the "yes" or "no" questions, so that the students could explain their responses to several of the situations and to gather more data. The purpose of this was to measure students' opinions of anxiety provoking situations on different classroom activities, including activities involving pair work, preparedness, and motivation.

The questionnaire component was valid because it was taken from a pre-existing questionnaire, which was modified by the researchers. The test-retest for reliability has previously shown a satisfactory correlation of $r = .74$, $p < .001$. A summary of the results are presented for school A in Figures 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9, and for school B in Figures 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10.

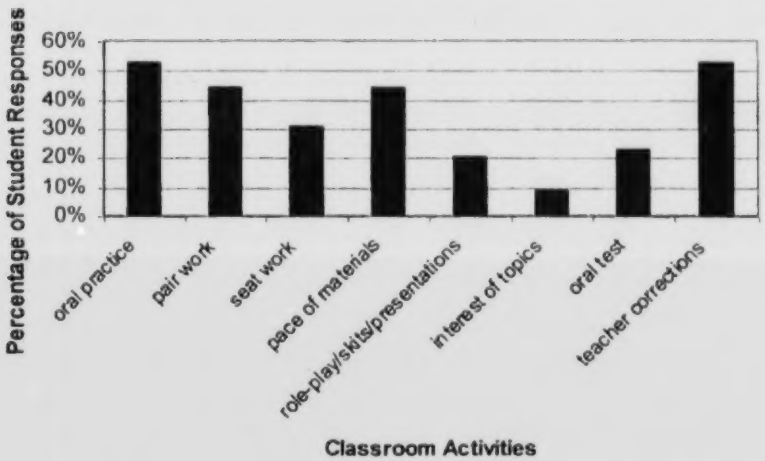

Figure 1. Questionnaire for School A, questions related to classroom activities which increase anxiety and frustration.

In interpreting the data for Figure 1, dealing with classroom activities at school A, many different conclusions were made about anxiety and frustration. By examining the responses, the greatest areas of concern for over half of the students were in the areas of oral practice and teacher corrections at 53%. Closely following oral practice and teacher correction was pace of material at 45%. Nine percent of the students said that they were more willing to participate in class when the topics discussed were interesting whereas 91% said they would not. Upon further analysis, what was thought to be a cause for frustration and anxiety, oral test taking, was only a cause for 23% of the students. Twenty-one percent of the students expressed that they did not enjoy coming to class when they knew that they were going to role-play situations, perform skits or do presentations. Nearly one-third of the students reported that both pair work and seat work caused them anxiety and frustration in the classroom. Of the eight classroom activities being

examined only one of the eight was controlled by the teacher; the other seven were controlled by the curriculum.

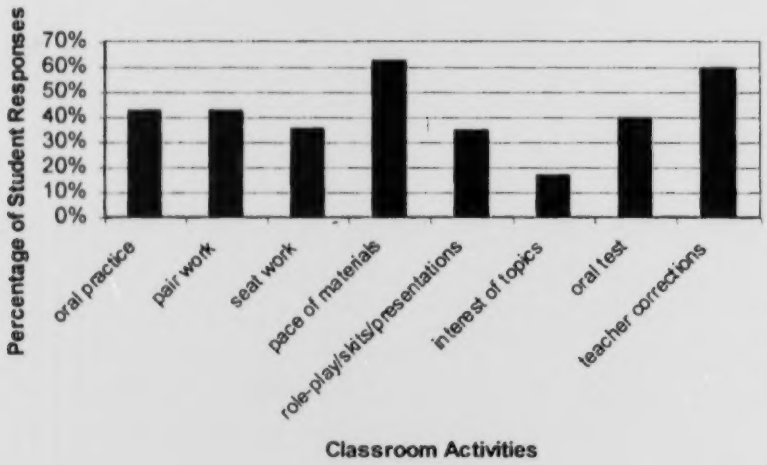

Figure 2. Questionnaire for School B, questions related to classroom activities which increase anxiety and frustration.

In interpreting the data for Figure 2, dealing with classroom activities at school B, many different conclusions were made about anxiety and frustration. By examining the responses, the greatest areas of concern for over half of the students were in the areas of teacher corrections at 60% and pace of materials at 63%. Oral practice, pair work and oral testing produce anxiety and frustration for 40% or more of the students. Still over one third of the students are adversely affected by role-playing, skits or presentations at 35%, and seat work at 36%. Seventeen percent of the students said that they felt anxiety and frustration when topics of interest were discussed. Of the eight classroom activities being examined, only one of the eight was controlled by the teacher; the other seven were controlled by the curriculum.

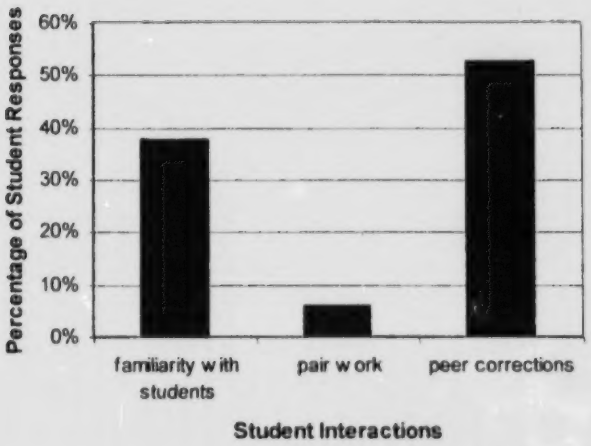

Figure 3. Questionnaire for School A, questions related to the type of student interactions which increase anxiety and frustration.

The data collected from the students at school A in reference to student interaction, Figure 3 showed that overall 94% of the students had a high comfort level when they could work in pairs with other students. Even though the students felt a high comfort level when working with peers, 53% of the students said that they felt uneasy when their fellow classmates were asked to correct their mistakes in class. Although the students expressed positive feelings about working with others, 38% of the students encountered anxiety and frustration regardless of their familiarity with the student.

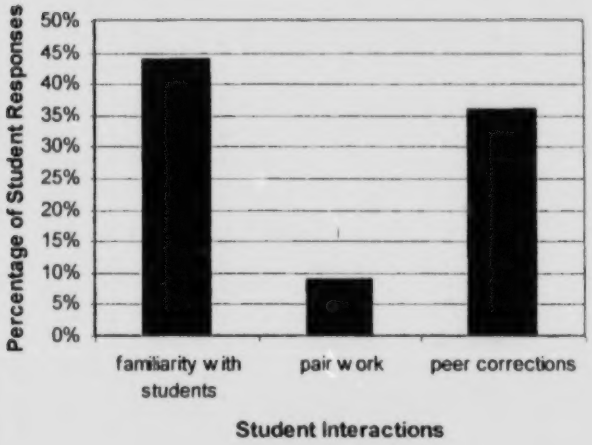

Figure 4. Questionnaire for School B, questions related to the type of student interactions which increase anxiety and frustration.

The data collected from the students at school B in reference to student interaction, Figure 4 showed that overall 91% of the students had a high comfort level when they could work in pairs with other students. Even though the students felt a high comfort level when working with peers, 36% of the students said that they felt uneasy when their fellow classmates were asked to correct their mistakes in class. Although the students expressed positive feelings about working with others, 44% of the students encountered anxiety and frustration regardless of their familiarity with the student.

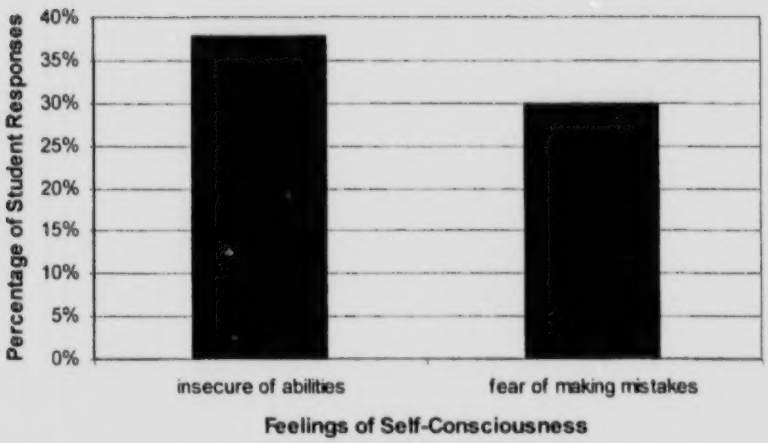

Figure 5. Questionnaire for School A, students' feelings of self-consciousness which increase student anxiety and frustration.

According to the data in Figure 5 regarding students' feelings of self-consciousness, at least 30% of the students at school A reported self-insecurities. Thirty-eight percent of the students indicated that while they were fully aware of being assessed by the teacher, they were insecure about their responses in Spanish. Nearly one-third of the students stated that making a mistake caused them to experience anxiety and frustration.

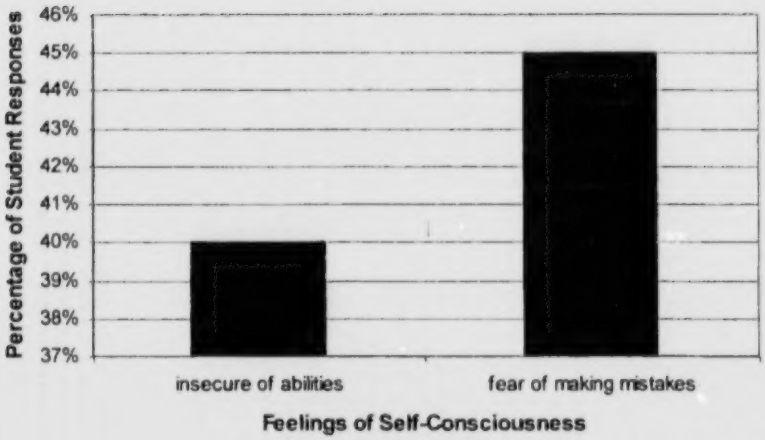

Figure 6. Questionnaire for School B, students' feelings of self-consciousness which increase student anxiety and frustration.

According to the data in Figure 6 regarding students' feelings of self-consciousness, at least 40% of the students at school B reported self-insecurities. Forty percent of the students indicated that while they were fully aware of being assessed by the teacher, they were insecure about their responses in Spanish. Forty-five percent of the students stated that making a mistake caused them to experience anxiety and frustration.

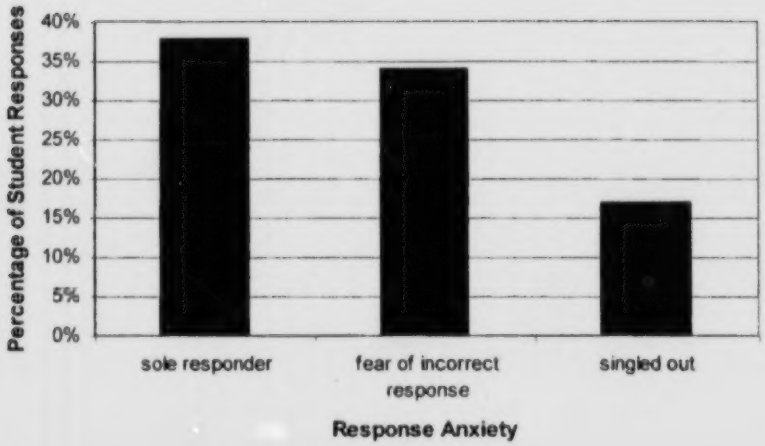

Figure 7. Questionnaire for School A, questions related to answering questions orally which increase anxiety and frustration.

Of all of the information presented in Figure 7 referring to response anxiety regarding oral questions, the one area where students at school A expressed the strongest feelings of anxiety and frustration was when they were the only student raising their hand to answer a question in class, or sole responder, as indicated by 38% of the students. When responding to a question, 34% of the students said that they would not be willing to volunteer answers in class even if they were not afraid of giving an incorrect response. When singled out in class to answer a question, 17% of the students felt frustration and anxiety and would rather volunteer an answer instead of being called on.

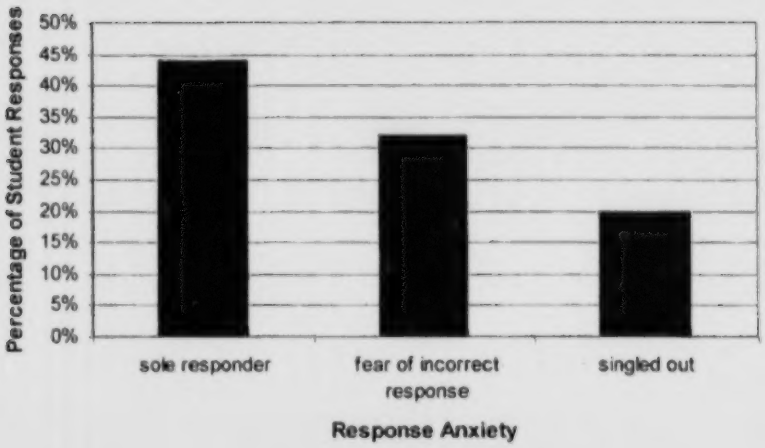

Figure 8. Questionnaire for School B, questions related to answering questions orally which increase anxiety and frustration.

Of all of the information presented in Figure 8 referring to response anxiety regarding oral questions, the one area where students at school B expressed the strongest feelings of anxiety and frustration was when they were the only student raising their hand to answer a question in class, or sole responder, as indicated by 44% of the students. When responding to a question, 32% of the students said that they would not be willing to volunteer answers in class even if they were not afraid of giving an incorrect response. When singled out in class to answer a question, 20% of the students felt frustration and anxiety and would rather volunteer an answer instead of being called on.

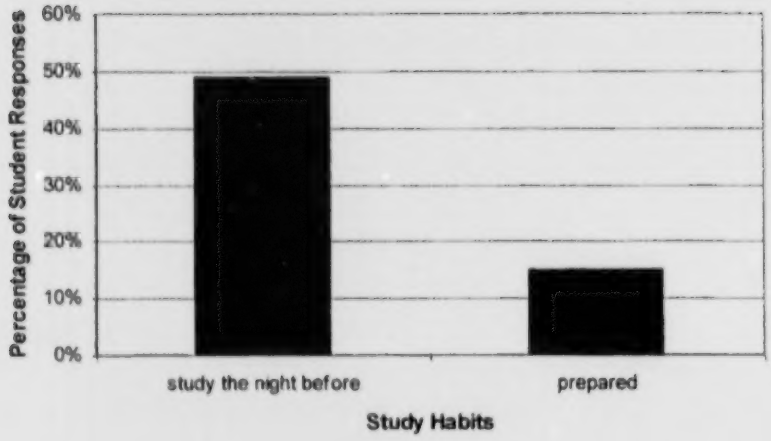

Figure 9. Questionnaire for School A, students' study habits which increase anxiety and frustration.

In Figure 9 reflecting students' study habits, a total of 49% of the students at school A said that they felt discomfort and anxiousness despite the fact that they had studied the night before. Fifteen percent of the students said that even when they came to class prepared, they felt anxious.

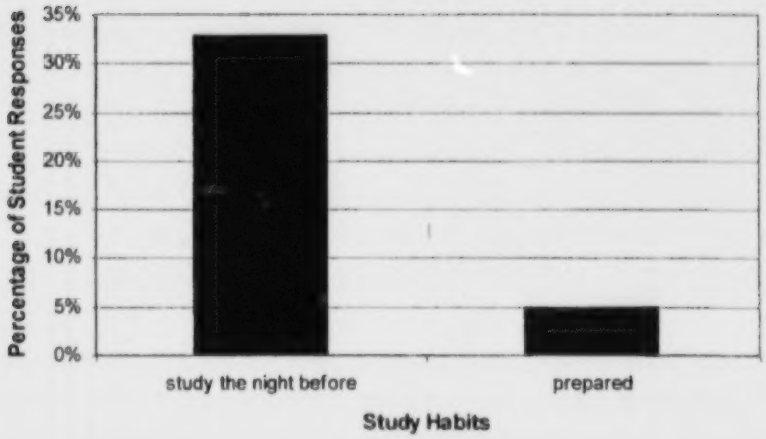

Figure 10. Questionnaire for School B, students' study habits which increase anxiety and frustration.

In Figure 10 reflecting students' study habits, a total of 33% of the students at school B said that they felt discomfort and anxiousness despite the fact that they had studied the night before. Five percent of the students said that even when they came to class prepared, they felt anxious.

The second tool for gathering evidence was a scale that was adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). It was modified from the original scale by discarding the "neutral" option, forcing the subjects to either "agree" or "disagree" with the statements from the scale. The students were forced to choose "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", or "strongly disagree" to thirty-three questions. The purpose of this scale was to measure the anxiety experienced by the students in several areas of the foreign language class. In the results the researchers combined the two categories of "strongly agree" and "agree", finding an average mean response percentage.

In the original study the scale demonstrated an internal reliability, achieving an alpha coefficient of .93 with all items producing significant corrected item-total scale correlations. Test-retest reliability over eight weeks yielded an $r=.83$ ($p<.001$). Pilot testing with the FLCAS affords an opportunity to examine the scope and severity of foreign language anxiety. To date, the results demonstrate that students with debilitating anxiety in the foreign language classroom setting can be identified and that they share a number of characteristics in common. Responses to all FLCAS items are reported in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1.

FLCAS items for school A with percentages of students selecting each alternative, January 2002.

	SA*	A	D	SD
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	4**	32	45	6
2. I worry about making mistakes in language class.	11	34	26	11
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	0	15	34	43
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	13	15	26	30
5. It would bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	11	19	19	34
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	13	45	19	11
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	11	19	32	19
8. I am usually not at ease during tests in my language class.	13	28	28	19
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	19	26	30	13
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	28	28	17	13
11. I understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	23	26	11	15
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	6	21	36	23
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	6	11	28	38
14. I would be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	15	36	15	28
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	6	28	40	13
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	4	17	43	15

Table 1 results are continued on the following page, please see for the key.

Table 1 results are continued from the previous page.

	SA*	A	D	SD
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	17	23	32	13
18. I don't feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	6	21	53	13
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	6	23	47	11
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on my language class.	4	11	43	19
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	11	4	26	43
22. I feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	11	19	36	11
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	6	28	30	23
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	9	26	34	15
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	11	11	38	26
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	11	17	28	28
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	2	15	55	13
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel unsure and anxious.	0	4	40	32
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	4	19	38	19
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	30	32	34	8
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at my when I speak the foreign language.	4	17	30	19
32. I would not feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	11	36	26	26
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	17	34	32	6

*SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.
**Data in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 2.

FLCAS items for school B with percentages of students selecting each alternative, January 2002.

	SA*	A	D	SD
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	8**	33	45	8
2. I worry about making mistakes in language class.	19	40	24	11
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	7	19	41	29
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	13	19	37	25
5. It would not bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	8	21	35	29
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	9	32	41	5
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	5	27	44	19
8. I am usually not at ease during tests in my language class.	7	25	47	13
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	8	35	40	12
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	19	32	19	11
11. I understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	24	41	21	11
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	7	28	35	12
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1	11	48	35
14. I would be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	8	17	37	32
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	7	4	40	44
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	4	27	33	31

Table 2 results are continued on the following page, please see for the key.

Table 2 results are continued from the previous page.

	SA*	A	D	SD
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	7	15	29	44
18. I don't feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	4	21	44	25
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	7	25	39	31
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on my language class.	8	17	37	32
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	7	4	40	44
22. I feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	8	11	56	19
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	11	20	45	19
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	12	27	41	15
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	15	15	39	27
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	7	21	37	29
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	4	25	37	27
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel unsure and anxious.	3	11	37	44
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	4	20	36	19
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	9	29	39	15
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at my when I speak the foreign language.	4	17	32	37
32. I would not feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	12	48	28	3
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	27	47	19	16

*SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

**Data in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

By grouping questions 1, 9, 18, 24, and 27, all related to speaking, 32% of the students from school A (Table 1) and 35% from school B (Table 2) agreed that there was fear or anxiety, panic without preparation, lack of confidence when speaking individually or in front of others, and nervousness and confusion in the foreign language classroom. In reference to mistakes and corrections, questions 2, 15, and 19, it was found that 37% of the students from school A and 37% from school B said that they worried about making mistakes in the class, or worried that the teacher was ready to correct every mistake, and became upset when they did not understand what the teacher was correcting. Only 24% of students from school A and 29% from school B expressed fear of not understanding the teacher and/or the spoken word, even if they were well prepared, questions 4, 16, and 29. By grouping questions 7, 13, 23, 25, and 31, it was found that 25% of the students from school A and 30% from school B felt less competent than others, had feelings of self-doubt, feelings of embarrassment or being laughed at, worried about the pace of the class, or being negatively evaluated. Trembling, heart palpitations, forgetfulness, confusion, nervousness, and uneasiness were reactions that 31% of the students from school A and 37% from school B indicated that they had felt in their foreign language class as noted in questions 3, 8, 10, 12, 20, 21, and 33. One of the highest percentages was indicated for the students' attitudes towards their foreign language class. Forty-three percent of the students from school A and 57% from school B said that they would like to take more foreign language classes, could remain focused in class, could empathize with others' frustrations, had a desire to attend, and had a lack of pressure to prepare for language class. This data was gathered through questions 5, 6, 11, 17, and 22. Of all of the responses to questions 14 and 32, the anxiety when dealing with native speakers was the highest at 49% from school A and 43% from school B. Although all of

the questions dealt with anxiety in the foreign language classroom, it was found through questions 26, 28, and 30 that there was a distinct foreign language anxiety that was different from other forms of anxiety. This is evidenced in the responses of 32% of the students from school A and 26% from school B who felt more tense and nervous in the foreign language class than in other classes, experienced anxiousness even before their arrival to foreign language class, and felt overwhelmed by the number of rules they needed to know in order to speak in the foreign language.

The third tool for gathering evidence was a student interview. The purpose of the interview was to identify anxiety felt by the subjects in their Spanish class. The interview created by the researchers was given to a random sample of five subjects per class from five beginning first year Spanish classes. The students were selected from the alphabetical class lists where every fifth student was chosen.

This interview component was reliable because the information received was authentic and first hand. The interviewer was certified in Spanish and had actual experience teaching Spanish at the given grade level. Although the subject selection was random, the subjects were taken from the same basic core group of subjects. This interview had external validity because it was taken from a large random sample of mixed ability levels and had internal validity because all the questions pertain to anxiety in the Spanish class. A summary of the results from the interview is located in Table 3.

Table 3.

Student interview data from schools A & B, January 2002.

Anxiety Provoking Items	Percentage of Responses School A 10 Students	Percentage of Responses School B 15 Students
Tests / Quizzes	80	53
Being called on without hand raised	30	27
Word pronunciation	0	7
Oral test	n/a	20
Presentation / Skit	50	20
Student preparation	30	0
Do not comprehend	20	0

Data in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

All of the 10 students that were interviewed from school A shared feelings of anxiety in the Spanish foreign language classroom. As shown in Table 3, tests and quizzes together were reported as anxiety producers among 80% of the students. Fifty percent of those interviewed expressed that presentations and skits with a group or partner in front of the class tended to be very stressful and difficult. Being called on by the teacher without having a hand raised was reported by 30% of the students as being an anxiety provoker. Two students or 20% of the interviewees shared feelings that situations had occurred where they did not understand the happenings of class. One situation occurred when a student did not understand the directions on a homework assignment nor did he ask for clarification from the teacher. He perceived himself to be the only one that did not understand, therefore, he did not want to feel "stupid" asking a question. Thirty percent of the students reported that they felt anxious when they were not prepared for class, but they added that in essence they were causing their own anxiety by not being prepared.

It was significant that all of the 15 students interviewed from school B had at least one comment to share about anxiety in the classroom. Of the 15 students who were interviewed from School B, 53% reported that they experienced anxiety when they were taking a test or quiz. Of those students, some commented that study guides given by the teacher to the students before the tests were very helpful to review important material. In addition, two students offered that they believed that they would feel less stress if they studied more before the tests and quizzes. Being called on by the teacher without having a hand raised was an anxiety-provoking situation for 27% of the students. Sitting one-on-one with the teacher outside of the classroom during an oral test on chapter material caused anxiety in 20% of the students. Along the same lines of communicating in the target language, 20% of the students reported feeling anxious or nervous when they had to present a skit or presentation with a partner or group to the class. Another student added that anxiety was experienced when pronouncing words aloud in front of the class in Spanish that he perceived as difficult.

In conclusion, the methods of assessing problem evidence used by the researchers, the student questionnaire, the student interview, and the FLCAS, found there to be levels of frustration and anxiety among the students in the researchers' foreign language classrooms. Various classroom activities, types of student interaction, student study habits, curricula and teacher-student interactions were found to add to the levels of frustration and anxiety.

Probable Causes

The literature suggested several underlying causes for anxiety in the foreign language classroom. Anxiety is defined in its simplest form as feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, insecurity, or apprehension and is intricately intertwined with self-esteem issues and

natural ego-preserving fears (Sellers, 2000). Research has shown that foreign language anxiety can be identified by physiological symptoms such as sweaty palms, nervous stomachs, increased heartbeats, and accelerated pulse rates (Saito & Samimy, 1996). In 1991 Young (as cited Saito & Samimy, 1996, p. 240) stated that foreign language anxiety may manifest itself through psycholinguistic factors such as "distortion of sounds, inability to reproduce the intonation and rhythm of the language, 'freezing up' when called on to perform, and forgetting words or phrases just learned or simply refusing to speak and remaining silent."

In 1999, Saito, Garza, and Horwitz did a study that questioned whether foreign language reading anxiety exists as a phenomenon distinguishable from general anxiety. The study also questioned the learners' perceptions of the difficulty of their particular target language with relation to their levels of foreign language reading anxiety. The subjects were 383 students enrolled in first-semester university French, Japanese, and Russian courses (n=192 for French, 114 for Japanese, and 77 for Russian). The French and Russian classes met for five scheduled class hours per week, whereas the Japanese classes met for six hours a week throughout the 15-week semester. There were two instruments used in the study. The first was the FLCAS. The scale contains 33 items, each of which is answered on a 5-point Likert-scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The second instrument was the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) which contains 20 items, also scored on a 5-point Likert-scale. The student's final course grades were obtained at the end of the semester as a global measure of performance. During the 11th week of the fall semester, participants were asked to complete both of the scales as well as to answer a background questionnaire. The questionnaire supplied

information such as gender, year in college, and previous experience studying the same foreign language.

The results indicated that students with higher levels of foreign language anxiety also tended to have higher levels of foreign language reading anxiety. Students with higher levels of reading anxiety in this study received significantly lower grades than students with lower anxiety levels. Foreign language reading anxiety exists as a phenomenon distinguishable from general foreign language anxiety. Two aspects of foreign language reading would seem, however, to have great potential for eliciting anxiety. This anxiety comes from unfamiliar scripts and writing systems and unfamiliar cultural materials (Saito, Garza, & Horwitz, 1999).

Considerable research has accumulated indicating reading is a language-based skill and pointing to a lack of "phonological awareness" as the primary problem of children who fail to read. The relationship between phonological awareness and reading failure has been supported by studies in a variety of languages, including Spanish. Evidence exists to indicate that phoneme segmentation, the ability to separate a word into its constituent phonemes, is strongly linked to reading ability and plays a primary role in the speed of initial reading acquisition. Poor readers have been found to have difficulty making explicit reports about word segments at the phoneme level and their poor perception of phonemes negatively affects word decoding. Overall, poor readers had difficulties with both phonology and syntax along with phonological coding (Sparks & Ganschow, 1993).

Speaking in a foreign language is often cited by students as their most anxiety-producing experience. Public speaking in a native language is often associated with fear and anxiety, and several researchers have found that speaking the foreign language in the classroom can also be

very anxiety provoking. In a study conducted by Young in 1990, 135 beginning-level Spanish students at the University of Texas and 109 first- and second-year Spanish students in Austin high schools completed a four-page questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher to identify different types of in-class activities, specifically speaking-oriented ones, that evoked anxiety. The study examined language anxiety in relation to in-class activities and instructor behavior. The results suggested that speaking activities which require "on the spot" and "in front of the class" performance produced the most anxiety from the students' perspective. Students reported having moderate anxiety when they presented a prepared dialog in front of the class, made an oral presentation or skit in front of the class, spoke in front of the class (at seat), and role played a situation spontaneously in front of the class (Young, 1990).

In a study done by Phillips in 1992, the research suggested that oral skills were problematic for second language learners. The subjects for this study were drawn from students enrolled in two third-semester French classes at Southwestern University. The subject size was 35 females and nine males ranging from ages 17 to 21. During the eleventh week of the semester, students met individually in the professor's office to take an oral exam that comprised of ten percent of their course grade. The exam, designed to be communicative and open-ended, consisted of two parts. The first part was an open-ended discussion about a cultural issue. The second part was a role-play. The students were given a randomly assigned cue sheet with directions in English that provided a framework for a situation that the student would expand on. Once the exams were completed, verbatim transcripts were typed, and an analysis of selected performance criteria was conducted. Another tool of measurement was the FLCAS, administered during the third week of class. The scale's 33 questions explored students' feelings associated with the foreign language

learning scale. The third data collection method was an interview that was administered to 12 students during the sixth week of class and a think aloud protocol was administered after the eleventh week. The 12 students were asked to listen to a tape recording of their oral exam and to describe the feelings and thoughts they experienced as they took the exam.

The findings supported a moderate inverse relationship between language anxiety and performance. In other words, students who expressed more foreign language anxiety tended to receive lower exam grades than their less anxious classmates. The anxiety they experienced may have had a debilitating impact on their ability to speak it. Unfortunately, this apprehension will likely be intensified by the ever-growing use of communicative oral testing because research also provides ample evidence that anxiety increases in evaluative situations (Phillips, 1992).

In 1996, Saito and Samimy conducted a study of learner anxiety among American university students. The study examined the relation of anxiety to students' language performance at three different instructional levels. The subjects were 257 students enrolled in the fall semester of beginning (first year), intermediate (second year) and advanced (third and fourth year) levels of a Japanese language course at the University of Texas at Austin. The participants included 134 beginning, 70 intermediate, and 44 advanced level students. During the semester, beginning level classes met for six hours a week, intermediate level classes met for five hours a week, and advanced level classes met for three hours a week for 15 weeks. The data was collected through a 29 item questionnaire that was administered during the fifth week of the fall semester. Each item was followed by a six point Likert response scale. The questionnaire instrument asked questions in six subcategories of language class anxiety, language class risk-taking, language

class sociability, strength in motivation, attitude toward the language class, and concern for grade.

The language class anxiety subcategory measured a student's feeling of embarrassment or anxiety. The language class risk-taking subcategory measured a student's tendency to assume risks by using the target language in class. The language class sociability subcategory measured the degree of willingness to use the target language to interact with others in the class. The strength of motivation subcategory measured a student's desire to learn the target language. The attitude toward the language class subcategory measured a student's attitude toward the target language class. The concern for the grade subcategory assessed a student's concern for grades. Another instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire about a student's background, supplying such information as gender, year in college, field of study, length of time spent in a target language speaking country, and the amount of time spent studying for the target language class. The study found that regardless of proficiency level, the more anxious the students are, the less likely they are to use new grammatical phrases, vocabulary, and sentences without significant practice due to the fear of making a mistake (Saito & Samimy, 1996).

Speaking is probably considered the most stressful of the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) from the perspectives of both second language teachers and learners (Young, 1992). The amount of research in the area of anxiety and oral production attested to that. The most often cited case is that of oral performance situations, such as the infamous role-playing scenario in which two students stood in the front of the classroom and talked on imaginary telephones about an imaginary party and planned all the details such as what they would eat and whom they would invite. Even if they rehearsed ahead of time, the dialogue

rarely went as planned. Anxiety played a significant role in affecting the outcomes (Sellers, 2000).

Another activity used by teachers that caused anxiety shows significant negative correlation with several language producing measures. These included cloze tests where the student fills in missing information in a paragraph with a word or phrase, composition tasks which ask the student to write an original paragraph or several paragraphs, and object proficiency measures where the students give an oral presentation to the teacher and/or class (Horwitz, 2001).

Since the 1970's, research on the relationship between writing apprehension and personality characteristics has provided justification for regarding writing apprehension as a distinct form of anxiety, unique to written communication. Although second language classroom anxiety and writing apprehension each claim to possess their own unique defining characteristics, they seem to share several assumptions, such as negative affect toward certain aspects of communication, avoidance of certain kinds of social exchanges, and fear of being evaluated (Cheng, Horwitz & Shallert, 1999).

Middle school adolescents are characterized by numerous developmental changes such as physical, social, emotional, and cognitive (Myriam, 1996). The stages that adolescents progress through are identified as psychological development, cognitive development, and moral development. The stage of psychological development is defined as identity versus role confusion. The adolescent's growing independence leads to initial thoughts about identity and there is greater concern for appearance and sex roles than occupational choices. The stage of cognitive development is defined as the beginning of formal operational thought (Biehler & Snowman, 1990). Piaget suggested that during the middle years, children moved from concrete

operations to formal operations. How new concepts were acquired would be influenced by maturational development. The difficulty many adolescents faced in mastering abstract grammar concepts may not be the reflection of how smart they were, it may be that they were not cognitively mature enough to grasp the concept. In this case, the student would benefit more from concrete experiences, such as presenting vocabulary through direct instruction and manipulating real objects and pictures that have all been set in meaningful contextual situations (Myriam, 1996).

Other general factors must be considered where adolescents were concerned; these are the physical and emotional aspects. The adolescent's growth spurts and puberty influence many aspects of behavior. Peers begin to influence behavior more than parents and become the general source of rules and behavior. The acceptance of peers becomes increasingly important. Adolescents find it reassuring to dress and behave like others and are likely to alter their own opinions to coincide with those of a group. When encouraged by teachers or students, the adolescent may participate in class discussions, volunteer answers, but may become reluctant to voice opposing opinions or make mistakes (Biehler & Snowman, 1990). Students may feel awkward about their appearance, may be reluctant to stand before the class for individual presentations, and may prefer opportunities to work in small groups or have student-teacher interaction rather than the individual presentations (Myriam, 1996).

When the capacity for formal operational thought starts to emerge, adolescents begin to abandon simplistic, concrete thinking and to construct more comprehensive and complex worldviews. Consequently, they become increasingly interested in the opinions and judgments of others – adults as well as peers from a variety of backgrounds. At the same time, their

adolescent egocentrism makes them highly sensitive to actual or anticipated criticism. This combination of sincerity and egocentrism put them in a cognitive bind, eager for lively intellectual interaction yet highly vulnerable to self-doubt. As a result, their increasing ability to imagine and theorize often take a self-defending tone, creating a "great potential for distortion". In 1989, Eccles and Medgley (as cited in Berger, 1994) found that this distortion caused a widespread dip in academic self-confidence just when young people entered secondary school, with many students feeling less able, less conscientious, and less motivated than they did in elementary school.

Many adolescents may go through a period of "storm and stress," or turmoil. Erik Erikson has been known to describe this as the nature of the identity crisis that often occurs during adolescence. Starting in the 1960s, a number of psychologists questioned whether turmoil was inevitable during the teen years. It was also reported that many 14-15 year olds experience anxiety and high emotional feelings of disturbance which could well be described as a form of inner turmoil. In a review of studies on adolescent turmoil, it was found that the stage of adolescence is interrupted by anxiety, worry, and concerns regarding self-esteem, physical appearance, and body image. Twelve to fifteen-year-olds have a formidable number of adjustments to make all at once: identity, puberty, and transition points in cognitive development. Many students were found to be moody, depressed, or preoccupied when they were in school (Biehler & Snowman, 1990).

Language anxiety can be discriminated reliably from other types of anxiety as suggested by both Horwitz (1986) and MacIntyre and Gardner (1989). Given the limitations produced by language anxiety on two key stages of cognitive processing, it would be easy to

understand why those with lower levels of anxiety, when compared to anxious students, tended to learn better (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989), were more willing to volunteer answers in language class (Ely, 1986), and were more socially active with the target language group (Clement, 1987). Language anxiety has been considered as an important problem according to anecdotal reports (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986) and now evidence has accumulated to describe the specific processes that underlie this effect (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991).

With all of these factors, physical, social, emotional, and cognitive it is understandable that a student studying foreign language may have anxiety. The stress of performing, presenting, and volunteering in his/her first language can make the student preoccupied with worry, self-conscience, or even anxious. So it is understandable and reasonable that this worry, self-consciousness, and anxiety may be carried over or even amplified in the foreign language classroom.

Another cause for student anxiety in the Spanish classroom may arise from a student's personal insecurities or a sense of self-consciousness. According to the article, "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety" by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope,

> Because individual communication attempts will be evaluated according to uncertain or even unknown linguistic and socio-cultural standards, second language communication entails risk taking and is necessarily problematic. Because complex and non-spontaneous mental operations are required in order to communicate at all, any performance in the second language is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self consciousness, fear, or even panic (1986, p. 128).

In the study using the FLCAS (Horwitz, 1986), there was a significant moderate negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and the grades the students expected in their first semester language class as well as their actual final grades. In this study students with higher levels of foreign language anxiety both expected and received lower grades than their less anxious counterparts (Horwitz, 1986).

MacIntyre and Garner (1989) also found significant negative correlations between a specific measure of language anxiety and performance on a vocabulary learning task. When the FLCAS was administered to the students during their scheduled language class the third week of the semester, the scale reflected communication apprehension, test-anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in the foreign language classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989).

For English-speakers, a target language is typically perceived as difficult. In a 1994 study by Aida, a significant negative correlation existed between FLCAS scores and final grades among American second-year Japanese students. Saito and Samimy (1996) replicated the finding with language learners at three levels (beginning, intermediate, and advanced). Similarly, in a study of Canadian university learners of French, Coulomb (2000) found a somewhat smaller, but significant, negative correlation between FLCAS scores and final grades in eleven French classes ranging from beginning to advanced (Horwitz, 2001).

Other studies have also found a negative relationship between language anxiety and outcome measures, such as, quizzes, tests, presentations, or participation in class, other than final grades. In one study by MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997), the relationship between anxiety and student's self-rating of their language proficiency was found to be negative. Some language production measures which included a cloze test, a composition task, and an objective language

proficiency measure were found to have a significant negative correlation with language use anxiety and classroom anxiety. There was even a somewhat higher negative correlation between student anxiety cores and their self-ratings of the target language competence than with their actual performance on the tests of the target language ability (Horwitz, 2001).

Anxious students, compared with more relaxed students, tended to communicate less information. Anxious language learners did not consistently perceive themselves to be anxious, and advanced and successful students also report anxiety reactions (Horwitz, 2000). In addition, the consistent negative correlations between anxiety and output quality indicate that anxious students tend not to express themselves as well as more relaxed students. Thus anxiety relates to both what the participants said and how they said it (MacIntyre, Noels, & Clement, 1997).

Some additional causes of anxiety included general personality traits such as quietness, shyness, and reticence that frequently precipitated communication apprehension. According to Freidman (1980), when the ability and desire to participate in discussion are present, but the process of verbalizing is inhibited, shyness or reticence is occurring. The degree of shyness, or range of situations that it affects, varies greatly from individual to individual (Holbrook, 1987).

Some current models of second language acquisition predicted that students' perceptions in the foreign language classroom can affect their successes in language acquisition in at least two ways: through the level of anxiety they possess and through the amount of motivation that results from their experiences. Participants in the current study saw many of their classroom experiences in a negative light. Although no direct measures of anxiety were made, it was likely that such a negative reaction to certain classroom practices may lead to increased levels of anxiety on the part of students. Similarly, several students expressed a generally negative view

of the foreign language classroom and a low level of perceived success; both factors that are due to have an impact on their motivation for further exposure to the language (Tse, 2000).

A final cause for student anxiety is directly linked to student motivation. Student motivation and the effort students devoted to academic tasks can be circumscribed by teacher expectations. Students recognized the lower expectation level and, over time, their self-concept and motivation declined until the potential to achieve was diminished. This may lead to limited educational success, which in turn affects the desire to remain in school (Sanchez, 2000).

As documented through a review of literature, it was determined that the causes of foreign language anxiety can be found in a variety of activities such as oral communication, writing, and reading in the target language. Not only are these causes of anxiety found through literature, but also in school A and school B.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Whether novice or expert, any foreign language learner may at one time or another experience anxiety when speaking the language in a controlled school environment. In order to decrease this language anxiety, strategies on the part of the teacher and the student have been uncovered to make the speaker less anxious when engaging in anxiety producing activities. This has been recorded in the literature.

The school environment can play a vital role in the prevention of communication apprehension, the individual level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons. In 1980 Friedman (as cited in Holbrook, 1987) described a healthy classroom as one which included creating a warm, easygoing climate in the classroom, helping students get to know one another at the beginning of the year, using drama or role-play situations, allowing students to work with classmates with whom they feel most comfortable, having students speak from their seats rather than in front of the room, and presenting students with oral activities in a developmental sequence. Suggested activities for overcoming anxiety and improving presentation skills include: informally questioning students concerning curricular topics about which they are knowledgeable, reading speech transcripts and

listening to master (native) speakers, playing charades, and presenting speeches without eye contact such as role play (Holbrook, 1987).

In 1998 Palacios (as cited in Horwitz, 2001) examined the impact of classroom climate on students' level of foreign language anxiety and found that several components of classroom climate were associated with higher (and lower) levels of anxiety. According to Palacios (1998) the level of perceived teacher support had the strongest relationship with students' feelings of anxiety. The study that Palacios examined indicates that classroom atmosphere rather than specific instructional activities may decrease student anxiety levels. In the opinion of Horwitz, "This finding is very comforting to me because I believe that many language teachers will be pleased to extend these human qualities to their students to an even greater degree" (2001, p. 119).

In 1996 Saito and Samimy conducted a study of learner anxiety among American university students (Saito & Samimy, 1996). The study examined the relationship of anxiety to students' language performance at three different instructional levels. The subjects were 257 students enrolled in the fall semester of beginning (first year), intermediate (second year) and advanced (third and fourth year) levels of foreign language courses, specifically the Japanese language, at the University of Texas at Austin. The participants included 134 beginning, 70 intermediate, and 44 advanced level students. During the semester, beginning level classes met for six hours a week, intermediate level classes met for five hours a week, and advanced level classes met for three hours a week for 15 weeks. The data was collected through a 29-item questionnaire that was administered during the fifth week of the fall semester. Each item was followed by a six point Likert response scale. The questionnaire instrument asked questions in six subcategories of

language class anxiety, language class risk-taking, language class sociability, strength in motivation, attitude toward the language class, and concern for grade.

The results indicated that while beginning level students are still in the process of developing successful learning strategies, such as reasoning, practicing and memorizing, higher level learning students have already attained effective study skills and/or foreign language learning strategies and, therefore, are able to work toward expected performance goals more effectively than beginning level college students.

Anxiety was not a predictive variable for beginning level students, but was a predictive variable for intermediate and advanced level students. In the beginning level classes, it was found that many of the students had not had sufficient experiences (positive or negative) in foreign languages for anxiety to play a significant role in their performance, thus not being a predictive variable. This study suggested that, regardless of proficiency level, the more anxious students are, the less likely they are to use a new grammatical pattern or vocabulary word until sufficient practice or time had reduced the likelihood of making a mistake within the target language. A psychologically secure environment may be a necessary condition before learners will take linguistic risks (Saito & Samimy, 1996).

Learner receptivity according to Ariza (1999) can be achieved through a relaxed environment where the student is able to get involved with their own learning. To be able to learn, one should be receptive. To be receptive, one must have an open mind and be flexible. When past learning or experiences have burned painful memories of embarrassment, ridicule, or fear into the psyche, it takes much effort on the part of the teacher to erase those images and replace them with entirely new attitudes.

In 1994 Caine and Caine (as cited in Ariza, 1999) stated that a language learning environment where the learner feels non-stressed and non-threatened is a prerequisite to creating this new attitude because if the teacher can create a state of "relaxed alertness" (p. 100), the learner can become flexible and process new information. The brain will not "downshift" (p. 100) or shut down because of panic. A safe learning climate utilizes three key principles as a basis for building. The first principle is that the teacher should get to know the students as individuals, for example finding out what the students are interested in, about the student's family, and about student disabilities. This can help the teacher modify lessons for his/her students. The second principle is that the teacher must change oneself to adapt to the students, such as adjusting the pacing of the curriculum or lesson for each individual class, varying length of homework assignments, and changing teaching styles, such as total physical response (TPR) or direct instruction, for specific class needs. The third principle is that the teacher give the students opportunities to experience comfort and success in the classroom by praising the students for doing well in an activity, allowing the students to freely express opinion, and using authentic error correction. (Ariza,1999).

The foreign language teacher aiming at training his/her students in using language learning strategies should learn about the students, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn what language learning strategies students already appear to be in use by observing students' behavior in class. Do they ask for clarification, verification, or correction? Do they cooperate with their peers or seem to have much contact outside of class with proficient foreign language users? Besides observing their behavior in class the teacher can prepare a short questionnaire that students can fill out at the beginning of a course to describe themselves and

their language learning. Thus the teacher can learn the purpose of their learning a language, their favorite/least favorite kinds of class activities, and the reason why they learn a language. The teacher can have adequate knowledge about the students, their goals, motivations, language learning strategies, and their understanding of the course to be taught (Lessard-Clouston, 1995).

It is a fact that each learner within the same classroom may have different learning styles and varied awareness of the use of strategies. The teacher cannot attribute importance to only one group and support the analytical approach or only give input by using the auditory mode. The language teacher should, therefore, provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to meet the needs and expectations of his/her students possessing different learning styles, motivations, strategy preferences, etc. In 1997 Lessard-Clouston found that the language teacher should study his/her own teaching method and overall classroom style. Analyzing his/her lesson plans, the language teacher can determine whether his/her lesson plans give learners a chance to use a variety of learning styles or not. The teacher can see whether his/her teaching allows learners to approach the task at hand in different ways or not. The language teacher can also be aware of whether his/her strategy training is implicit, explicit, or both. Thorndike & Barnhart (1957) define implicit as "meant, but not clearly expressed or distinctly stated" and explicit as "clearly expressed; distinctly stated; definite" (p. 349 & 491). It should be emphasized that by questioning oneself about what he/she plans to do before each lesson and by evaluating his/her lesson plan after the lesson in term of strategy training, the teacher can become better prepared to focus on language learning strategies and strategy training during the process of his/her teaching (Hismanoglu, 2000).

The motivational and attitudinal side effects of being placed in a foreign language classroom without the prerequisite skills necessary for success when learning a new language can, indeed, be overwhelming for some students. Many new foreign language learners undoubtedly suffer from anxiety in the foreign language classroom. Affective strategies which lessen anxiety and create a more positive attitude may be a comfort to many of these students. Instructional approaches such as the use of language learning strategies, or metacognitive training, may help some students function more effectively on a day-to-day basis. Strategies or methods such as a multisensory approach, simultaneously stimulate listening, speaking, reading, and writing which assists the students in learning the foreign language. (Sparks & Ganschow, 1993).

Educators have two options when dealing with anxious students: 1) they can help them learn to cope with the existing anxiety provoking situation; or 2) they can make the learning context less stressful. But before either option is viable, the teacher must first acknowledge the existence of foreign language anxiety. Extremely anxious students are highly motivated to avoid engaging in the classroom activities. They may appear simply unprepared or indifferent. Therefore, teachers should always consider the possibility that anxiety is responsible for the student behaviors before attributing poor student performance solely to lack of ability, inadequate background, or poor motivation (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

These two approaches would seem to apply in the case of reading anxiety as well. With respect to the first option, teachers could prepare their students for the possibility of reading difficulties and possible anxiety when introducing reading assignments. Knowing that anxiety and reading difficulties are possible is often reassuring for many students who feel alone in their reactions. As in the case of other types of anxiety, specific anxiety-reduction measures such as

deep breathing or positive self-talk could be beneficial. In order to make reading less stressful, reading strategy instruction is indicated both to help learners overcome their unrealistic expectations for understanding everything they read and to develop reading practices that are more effective than translations.

Teachers may be able to help their students by acknowledging the unique characteristics and features of their target language, carefully selecting authentic materials to demonstrate how students can use the vocabulary and structures they have been studying, bringing students into discussions of the foreign language learning process, ensuring that teaching goals are appropriate and attainable, and helping students recognize that they can be successful. Teachers may also help by pacing the course so that students are challenged but not faced with cognitive overload, by teaching successful learning and reading strategies, and by devoting more time to prereading activities and assessment of reading objectives (Saito, Garza, & Horwitz, 1999)

Compared with more relaxed students, anxious students tend to communicate less information. In addition, the consistent negative correlation between anxiety and output quality indicate that anxious students tend not to express themselves as well as more relaxed students. Thus, anxiety relates to both what the participants say and how they say it (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). In 1985 Gardner (as cited in MacIntyre, Noels, Clement, 1997) found that by encouraging students to assess their performance in a more positive, or even optimistic light, teachers could raise learners' level of motivation and effort, possibly leading to better language learning outcomes. A related strategy would encourage the students to concentrate on their ability to accomplish the task at hand. A language instructor dealing with anxious students

should be aware that apprehensive students might underestimate their ability (MacIntyre et al., 1997).

Error correction on the part of the teacher may play a significant role in student anxiety. Students can easily become self -conscious when speaking if the instructor is constantly correcting them. Teachers may want to provide interesting discussion topics, have students work in small groups or in pairs, and maintain a relaxed attitude over error correction. When the teacher wants his/her students to speak in front of the classroom, he/she could tailor activities to help reduce their anxiety. For example, Foss and Reitzel's study in 1988 (as cited in Young, 1990) describes an oral interpretation activity that takes into account the learner's anxiety over speaking in front of the class. In this activity, students practice reading a script orally before an audience only after they have practiced it extensively in a group. The desire on the part of students to have their mistakes corrected may originate in some preconceived notion about how foreign language classes work. Perhaps students have come to believe that improvement comes through error correction, a belief reinforced throughout the schooling acculturation. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that students believe their mistakes need correcting. In light of this finding, anxiety and fear of making a mistake may be more directly related to how, how often, and when errors are corrected (Young, 1990).

Three teaching strategies that Bransford, Vye, Kinzer, & Risko (1990) (as cited in Ngeow, 1998) discovered can be used to foster motivation and provide better transfer opportunities of language skills. The first skill encourages learners to take ownership in learning. An example of this would be to allow students to take ownership of the learning assignment by letting them identify and decide for themselves relevant learning goals. This will motivate them to apply

what they have learned to attain these learning goals. The second skill promotes intentional cognition or mindfulness to learning in various contexts. A learner must be able to practice language in multiple contexts in order to bridge domains and to foster active abstraction of concepts learned. The third skill increases authenticity of learning tasks and goals. An example of this strategy would be where students recognize a real need to accomplish learning goals that are relevant and holistic rather than task-specific. This prepares them for real-world tasks that require them to use language skills and knowledge that have to be continually transferred (Ngeow, 1998).

Results to date suggest that foreign language anxiety can be reliably and validly measured and that it plays an important role in language learning. Further research with the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) could improve the understanding of the effect of anxiety on language learning as well as the impact of different instructional methods or teaching styles on the learner. It is also hoped that the FLCAS will facilitate the identification of students experiencing debilitating anxiety so that appropriate classroom and individual interventions may be offered (Horwitz, 1986).

Successful language teachers understand the importance of modeling varied language expressions. Ideally, teachers model variety in their greeting and their requests to students, ranging from commands to very polite requests. Teachers use and take the time to explain idiomatic expressions, including explanations about their origins or some interesting fact related to their use. Students actively possess abstract meanings by creating visuals and other means of comprehending more concretely what an idiomatic expression may sound like but is not (Sosa, 2000).

Each student has his or her own learning style in which he or she learns best. Some of these learning styles include verbal linguistic, numerical, natural, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical rhythmic and visual/ spatial. Teaching implications should include 1) assessment of students' learning styles; 2) grouping of students by style; and 3) provisions for strategy training. Oxford (1989) asserts it is important to assess learning styles because "the role of style and strategies may be crucial in determining language learners' success" (Sparks & Ganschow, 1991, p. 4).

Learning a foreign language is not the same as studying one's native language. In 2000 Nugent reported students must be instructed in techniques or strategies of learning a foreign language, such as silent rehearsal, devices for memorization such as mnemonics, total physical response (TPR), and paraphrasing. Exposure to native speakers of the language should be a regular part of the curriculum. If guest speakers or volunteers are not available, the use of videotapes, audiotapes, pen pals, e-mail correspondence, and real-time chat via the internet may help. Such authentic materials as foreign language newspapers, comic books, menus, or product cartons and containers are also useful learning tools (Nugent, 2000).

Effective foreign language instruction at the middle school level provides opportunities for students to construct and create their own understanding of how to make meaning from what they hear and read, and how they use their understanding to construct and create their own meanings in speech and writing. In order to construct knowledge of a new language, students need exposure to the target language. This exposure makes the transmission of meaning in second languages accessible and understandable to students. Internalizing the relationship between meaning and the forms used to convey it is essential for production; students cannot

spontaneously produce language they do not understand. In the first phase of internalization, students learn to understand what is heard by matching meaning with language. Learners need to notice features in the input (vocabulary, syntax, disclosure markers) to which they can assign meanings. Through a carefully implemented sequence of instructional activities, students can be assisted to move through the construction of meaning. Students should be provided with comprehensible examples of new structures as used in authentic situations and extended spoken and written texts, as well as many opportunities to hear, understand, and match language with meaning (Met, 1996).

Effective language instruction is thematic and builds on topics and contexts that are relevant to the students. These topics or contexts can vary greatly, from activities based on the regular school curriculum, such as those found in content-based or content-related instruction, to other activities typically found in early language programs, such as drama, role-play, games, songs, children's literature, folk and fairy tales, storytelling, and puppetry. All of these activities contribute to the student's learning (Curtain, 2000).

One instructional strategy that Weyers (1999) suggests is teaching with the use of "telenovelas" or Spanish soap operas that are pre-screened and age level appropriate for students. These "telenovelas" are known as authentic television that provide students with an abundance of target language samples, used in context by native speakers. As such, foreign language instructors that use "telenovelas" find they are a valuable source of authentic target language usage that have a positive effect on student's communication skills (Weyers, 1999).

Materials for foreign language programs should reflect the developmental characteristics of learners and be consistent with current trends in instruction. Textbooks and materials should set

accessible goals that provide students with a sense of accomplishment and closure. Materials should be age appropriate and flexible enough to accommodate the diversity found in middle schools. Materials need to reflect a variety of learning styles, interests, abilities, attention spans, and backgrounds. Activities should reinforce positive aspects of students' self-image. Learning should be made concrete through contextualized vocabulary presentations and the extensive use of visuals such as pictured vocabulary, videos, and charts. Exercises and activities should involve hands-on student involvement, whether through the use of manipulatives or other forms of physical interaction. Instructional experiences should emphasize the development of understanding rather than the decontextualized memorization of vocabulary lists and grammar rules. Abstract concepts should be made accessible through concrete experience and scaffolding of complex tasks. Interaction with peers should be coupled with the usage of these materials to provide for the cognitive and social benefits of pair and group work. Classroom materials should be seen by students as relevant to their interests (Met, 1996).

Preventing or alleviating all anxiety in the foreign language classroom is an impossible task. However one can attempt to recognize, identify, and reduce anxiety. Both the teacher and the student take a role in the reduction factors.

Researchers generally agree that effective language teaching/learning methods are those that emphasize the need to reduce the anxiety and tension that inhibit second language performance. The objective in reducing the anxiety in learning a second language is to instill in students increased interest and motivation to learn the language. If students recognize their fears, they will be able to interpret anxiety-provoking situations in more realistic ways and eventually choose to approach rather than avoid an anxiety-evoking situation (Sellers, 2000).

There are two forms of motivation associated with second language learning; instrumental, and integrative. Instrumental motivation refers to the students' desire to learn the language for utilitarian purposes such as travel or employment. Integrative motivation refers to the desire to learn a language to integrate successfully into the target language community (Ngeow, 1998). In 1994 Oxford and Shearin (as cited in Ngeow, 1998) identified six factors that impact motivation in language learning. The first factor, attitude, is described as sentiments toward the learning community and the target language. The second factor, beliefs about self, is described as expressions about one's attitudes to succeed, self-efficacy, and anxiety. The third factor, goals, is described as the perceived clarity and relevance of learning goals as reasons for learning. The fourth factor, involvement, is described by the extent to which the learner actively and consciously participates in the language learning process. The fifth factor, environmental support, is described by the extent of teacher and peer support, and the integration of cultural and outside-of-class support into the learning experience. The sixth factor, personal attributes, is described by aptitude, age, sex, and previous language learning experience (Ngeow, 1998).

Students sometimes use different methods, or strategies, to deter their own second language anxiety. A strategy can be defined as specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques (often consciously) to improve one's progress in apprehending, internalizing, and using the second language. Because of language anxiety many potentially excellent second language learners are naturally inhibited. Rubin's (1975) study (as cited in Oxford, 1994) found several strategies that are essential for "good second language learners". Rubin suggests that good second language learners are willing and accurate guessers; have a strong drive to communicate; are often uninhibited; are willing to make mistakes; focus on form by looking for patterns and analyzing;

take advantage of all practical opportunities; monitor their speech as well as those of others; and pay attention to meaning. A number of these characteristics have been validated by subsequent research. However, the "uninhibited" aspect has not been confirmed as part of all or most good language learners. Because of language anxiety, many potentially excellent second language learners are naturally inhibited; they combat inhibition by using positive self–talk, by extensive use of practicing in private, and by putting themselves in situations where they have to participate communicatively (Oxford, 1994).

Chamot & Kupper (as cited in Oxford, 1994) found that certain language strategies are linked to particular language skills and tasks. For example, second language (L2) writing, like first language (L1) learners, benefit from the learning strategies of planning, self-monitoring, deduction, and substitution. L2 speaking requires strategies such as risk-taking, paraphrasing, circumlocution, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. L2 listening comprehension gains from the strategies of elaboration, inferencing, selective attention, and self-monitoring, while reading comprehension uses strategies like reading aloud, guessing, deduction, and summarizing (Oxford, 1994).

Language learning strategies are good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the process of language learning. Language learning strategies are nonobservable and unconsciously used in some cases, but they give language teachers valuable clues about how their students "assess the situation, plan, select appropriate skills so as to understand, learn, or remember new input presented in the language classroom" (Hismanoglu, 2000, p.7).

Oxford (1990) sees the aim of language learning strategies as being orientated towards the development of communicative competence. In Oxford's system, metacognitive strategies help learners to regulate their learning. Affective strategies are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence, while social strategies lead to increased interaction with the target language. Cognitive strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials. Rubin also identified six main cognitive learning strategies contributing directly to language learning. These include clarification/verification, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning, practice, memorization, and monitoring. These are the mental strategies learners use to make sense of their learning, memory strategies are those used for storage of information, and compensation strategies help the learner to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication.

Leow's study in 2001, investigated the role of awareness and its potential effects on learners' immediate behavior on both a recognition and written production task. There were 28 beginning level Spanish participants, a subset of 85 students with no previous knowledge or recognition of the linguistic form of Spanish. The 28 participants were chosen through a questionnaire. Before participating in the experiment, their formal exposure to Spanish was approximately 7.5 hours or 3 weeks. The linguistic forms in study were the "irregular" third person singular and plural preterit forms of the stem-changing –ir verbs in Spanish. The data was collected through a pre- and post-exposure assessment task, which consisted of 15 multiple-choice recognition tasks. A crossword puzzle was chosen as the experimental exposure task because of its problem-solving nature. The participants were requested to speak into microphones attached to tape-recorders as

they reasoned out their answers. The crossword puzzle lasted about 10 minutes or less. The researcher concluded that more awareness contributes to more recognition and accurate written production of noticed forms by enhancing further processing of these forms in the L2 data. This increased allocation of attention appears to permit learners to take in and retrieve the grammatical information immediately in a more efficient manner when compared to less awareness at this level (Leow, 2001).

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (as cited in Nugent, 2000) developed five goals as suggestions of experiences that aid students in reaching foreign language proficiency standards. The first standard is communication competence that extends beyond vocabulary and syntax. Students not only develop familiarity with the language, but also with the cultures that use the language, and an awareness of the interaction between culture and language. The second standard of culture recognizes an intrinsic relationship between culture and language. The study of foreign cultures through foreign language enables students to develop an awareness of other people's views of the world, their unique way of life, and the patterns of behavior that order their world, as well as an understanding of the contributions of other cultures to our society. The third standard of connections is made relevant to students' lives through curriculum content. According to the Illinois State Board of Education (2001), students should recognize and apply connections of important information and ideas within and among learning areas:

> Students of foreign languages make four types of connections throughout their study. First, they learn how to transfer skills and content of the foreign language in ways to better understand skills and content of the first language. Second, students make subject matter

> connections, reinforcing content and skills of other areas such as science and fine arts. Third, students explore issues and themes which cross disciplinary lines, and fourth, students use the target language for making connections to vocabulary and processes important to the world of work, in community service and for recreational purposes (p. 2).

The fourth standard of comparisons helps students become better equipped to reflect on their native language and culture after having studied other languages and cultures. As students become aware of and sensitive to the actions, opinions, and products of other cultures, they become aware of how people from other cultures may perceive Americans' actions, opinions, and products. The fifth standard entails communities that finds students competing with students from abroad who have had the benefit of learning at least one, often more than one, foreign language. This competition not only takes place in the economic arena, but in politics, the arts and technology where it is essential to know a foreign language in the now multilingual communities (Nugent, 2000).

According to the literature, a variety of techniques, methods, and processes are necessary to reduce the natural anxiety that is brought on by the foreign language curriculum which requires performance, communication, speaking, listening, and writing. Students will benefit from practice with the language, a comfortable classroom atmosphere, a supportive teacher, and the use of good foreign language study skills. The researchers have selected to design their intervention using the solutions of helping students cope with anxiety and practice the foreign language through multiple contexts.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of specific activities and procedures in the foreign language classrooms, during the period of January 2002 to March 2002, the seventh grade foreign language students from the targeted classes at School A and School B will decrease the amount of anxiety felt in the classroom, as measured by student surveys and grades.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. A study skills guide for studying a foreign language will be developed and reviewed with the students in order to help lessen anxiety and frustration. The guide will include a brief reflection component which allows the students to take ownership of their study skills (University of Texas Learning Center Website, 2001).
2. Group and partner presentation or skit and activities will be developed within the curriculum.
3. Group oral reading activities will be developed within the curriculum.
4. Total Physical Response (TPR) activities for the teacher will be developed into the class lessons.
5. Authentic correction by the teachers will be utilized.

Project Action Plan

Mon., January 28th

Administer student questionnaire (Appendix A) of student anxiety for entire class during Spanish period.

Fri., February 1st

Administer Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale for entire class during Spanish period.

Mon.-Fri., February 4th–8th

Student interview (Appendix B) of five students per class during non-class period time. (lunch and/or study hall)

Wed., February 13th

Distribute and discuss handout, "Tips on Studying a Foreign Language" (University of Texas Learning Center Website, 2001) during class period. This two-sided handout is filled with ideas for good study habits, tips, and suggestions for memorizing, practicing, and recalling a foreign language through reading, writing, listening, speaking, and more.

Thurs., February 14th

Whole class activity using the overhead projector called "Tic-tac-toe" (Appendix C), which practices unit vocabulary.

Partner activity, "Caricatura" (cartoon character dialogue) (Appendix D) that the students create by writing captions and drawing pictures using unit vocabulary and grammar.

Fri. and Mon., February 15th and 18th

Assign, discuss, and begin partner/group presentation using unit grammar, vocabulary, and content. Students will receive content guidelines and parameters, along with grading rubric (Humbach & Ozete, 2000, p. 3) (Appendix E). They

will have one class period of preparation time and will present the following class period to half of the class with their partner. The presenting groups will do a self-reflection about their materials presented. Listening groups will answer specific questions pertaining to the content presented.

Tues., February 26th

Distribute to the students a short authentic reading in Spanish about "chocolate" (Met, Sayers, Wargin & Barnett, 1997), which explores the early origin of chocolate through the Aztec history and culture. In groups of four, the students will read use prior knowledge to discuss topic of reading. Next, search and identify cognates from the reading. Finally, after reading aloud in small groups and discussing, students will answer several questions related to the reading within their group. The teacher elicits student volunteers to read the reading aloud. A large group discussion will follow.

Tues., March 5th

Use unit situation/conversation cards (Met, Sayers, Wargin & Barnett, 1997) to orally exchange information with partner. In pairs, the students ask and answer questions in Spanish, while recording responses.

Thurs., March 14th

Administer student questionnaire (Appendix A) of student anxiety for entire class during Spanish period, after intervention.

Fri., March 15th

Administer Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale for entire class during Spanish period, after intervention.

Mon.-Fri., March 18th –22nd

Student interview (Appendix B) of five students per class during non-class period time, after intervention. (lunch and/or study hall)

Methods of Assessment

In this study three methods of research assessment will be utilized in the last month of the study: a student questionnaire, the FLCAS, and student interviews. These three tools will look at the effectiveness of the intervention.

The student questionnaire (Appendix A) was adapted from one used in an article entitled "An Investigation of Students' Perspectives on Anxiety and Speaking" (Young, 1990). The researchers changed from the "agree" and "disagree" format to some "yes" or "no" questions and check boxes which would apply, to be better understood by the students at their grade level. Several "why" questions were included to coincide with the "yes" or "no" questions so that the students could explain their responses to several of the situations and to gather more data. The purpose of this is to measure students' opinions of anxiety provoking situations and on different classroom activities. This will also help to examine more closely additional activities observed by the teacher as interacting with language anxiety through pair work, preparedness and motivation.

This adapted questionnaire will be administered to five beginning first year Spanish classes with approximately 25 students per class at two middle schools in the Chicago suburban area.

The questionnaire will be administered twice to the students, once at the start of the Action Research Project in January of 2002 and again at the end of the Project in March of 2002 during their regularly scheduled Spanish class and will take approximately five to ten minutes to complete. The students will be told that their names will be coded for anonymity and that the information gathered will be used in their teacher's research project on anxiety.

The questionnaire component is valid because it was taken from a pre-existing questionnaire, which has been modified by the researchers. The test-retest for reliability has previously shown a satisfactory correlation of $r = .74$, $p < .001$.

Secondly, in order to gauge the level of student anxiety prior to the interventions, a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale will be administered. The scale was adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986). The original scale has been modified by discarding the "Neutral" option, forcing the students to either agree or disagree with the statements from the scale. The students will be forced to choose "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree" to thirty-three questions. The purpose of this scale is to measure the anxiety experienced by the students in several areas of the foreign language class.

This adapted scale will be administered to five beginning first year Spanish classes with approximately 25 students per class at two middle schools in the Chicago suburban area. The scale will be administered twice to the students, once at the start of the Action Research Project in January of 2002 and again at the end of the Project in March of 2002, during their regularly scheduled Spanish class and will take approximately ten minutes to complete. The students will

be told that their names will be coded for anonymity and that the information gathered will be used in their teacher's research project on anxiety.

The scale has demonstrated internal reliability, achieving an alpha coefficient of .93 with all items producing significant corrected item-total scale correlations. Test-retest reliability over eight weeks yielded an $r=.83$ ($p<.001$).

For the third measurement research tool, a student interview (Appendix B) will be conducted. The purpose of the interview will identify anxiety felt by the students in their Spanish class. The interview created by the researchers will be given to a random sample of five students per class from five beginning first year Spanish classes with approximately 25 students per class at two middle schools in the Chicago suburban area. Every fifth student will be chosen from the alphabetical class lists. The interview will be conducted twice with the same students, once at the start of the Action Research Project in January of 2002 and again at the end of the Project in March of 2002, during their regularly scheduled Spanish class and will take approximately ten minutes to complete. The students will be told that their names will be coded for anonymity and that the information gathered will be used in their teacher's research project on anxiety.

This interview component is reliable because the information received is authentic and first hand. The interviewer is certified in Spanish and has actual experience teaching Spanish at the given grade level. Although the student selection will be random, the students will be taken from the same basic core group of students. This interview has external validity because it is taken from a large random sample of mixed ability levels and has internal validity because all the questions pertain to anxiety in the Spanish class.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to decrease anxiety and frustration for seventh grade students in the Spanish language classroom through the implementation of various teacher and student strategies during the period of January 2002 to March 2002. The students' anxiety and frustration levels before and after the interventions were measured with a student questionnaire (Appendix A), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and student interview (Appendix B). These three measurement tools were administered as a pretest in late January and early February 2002. The posttest data was collected in late March 2002. The teacher intervention included a study skills guide for foreign language, partner/group presentation and activities, group oral reading activity, total physical response (TPR), authentic correction, and the creation of a non-threatening classroom environment and climate.

In early February the researchers implemented the study skills guide for foreign language (University of Texas Learning Center Website, 2001) by reviewing this two-sided handout that included ideas for good study habits, tips, and suggestions for memorizing, practicing, and recalling a foreign language through reading, writing, listening, speaking. The class discussed and examined the study guide for approximately 30 minutes. The study guide included a section where the students formed and then wrote two ideas that they planned to implement as their

Spanish study habits. This reflection gave them ownership of their own learning and helped students cope with anxiety by giving them concrete suggestions and ideas.

Another intervention strategy that the researchers introduced in February, was a "tic-tac-toe" activity (Appendix C) on the overhead projector which was used to promote group participation through reinforcement of vocabulary. The class was divided into two groups. These groups were further divided into subgroups of three to four students. One subgroup began by choosing a square in Spanish one through nine, the teacher then gave the clue to the subgroup and gave them an opportunity to respond. After the correct response was given, the teacher revealed the answer on the square and an appropriate "X" or "O" was awarded to the team. Each subgroup had the opportunity to participate and respond. This activity helped the students to become less self-conscious and anxious about speaking in Spanish because they were in groups and it also helped the students practice the language orally in a non threatening learning environment.

The partner activity, "Caricatura", a cartoon character dialogue, (Appendix D) was administered in February. In this activity the students wrote captions and drew pictures of characters using unit vocabulary and curriculum grammar. The guidelines for this activity prompted the students to the use specific vocabulary and grammar for each of the four frames. This activity was used by the researchers to practice language in multiple contexts which in turn made learning less stressful.

In February, the researchers assigned and discussed partner/group presentations using unit grammar, vocabulary, and content. The students received content guidelines and parameters, along with the grading rubric (adapted from Humbach & Ozete, 2000, p. 3) (Appendix E). They had one class period of preparation time and presented the following class period to half of the

class with their partner. Once completed, the presenting groups filled out a self-reflection about the quality of their overall presentation. The teacher asked specific questions of the listening groups, or groups not presenting, with regards to the content presented.

In late February, the researchers distributed a short authentic reading in Spanish about "chocolate" (Met, Sayers, Wargin, & Barnett, 1997), which explores the early origin of chocolate through the Aztec history and culture. The students read the article in groups of four using prior knowledge to discuss the topic. The students then searched and identified cognates from the article. Finally, after reading the article aloud in small groups and discussing, the students answered several questions related to the reading within their group. The teacher elicited student volunteers to read the article aloud. A large group discussion followed. This authentic learning exercise used within the curriculum addressed students' different learning styles through multiple contexts such as, reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

Unit situation/conversation cards (Met, Sayers, Wargin & Barnett, 1997) were used in early March to orally exchange information with a partner. In pairs the students asked and answered questions in Spanish, while their partner recorded responses. This activity modeled proper language usage in multiple contexts and allowed the students to safely correct each other in a non-threatening, less stressful environment.

In conclusion, the teacher intervention included a study skills guide for foreign language, group and partner presentation and activities, group oral reading activity, total physical response (TPR), and authentic correction from January 2002 to March 2002. The pretest and posttest data of students' anxiety and frustration levels were measured using a questionnaire (Appendix A), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, and student interview (Appendix B). The entire

intervention from January through March followed the original action plan stated in chapter 3. Although the total physical response (TPR) intervention strategy was not its own activity, the teachers intentionally used actions, gestures, and word association in the target language whenever possible.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The posttest data of students' anxiety and frustration levels were measured by the researchers using a student questionnaire (Appendix A), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, and student interview (Appendix B). Comparisons were made with the pretest and posttest data results from the student questionnaire (Appendix A), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, and student interview (Appendix B).

The first method of assessment was the student questionnaire (Appendix A), which was administered by the researchers in both school A and school B during the third week in March. In school A, 47 students participated in the research. In school B, 75 students participated in the research. The questionnaire contained the same 19 questions as the questionnaire administered in January. A summary of the posttest results are presented for school A in Figures 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19, and for school B in Figures 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20.

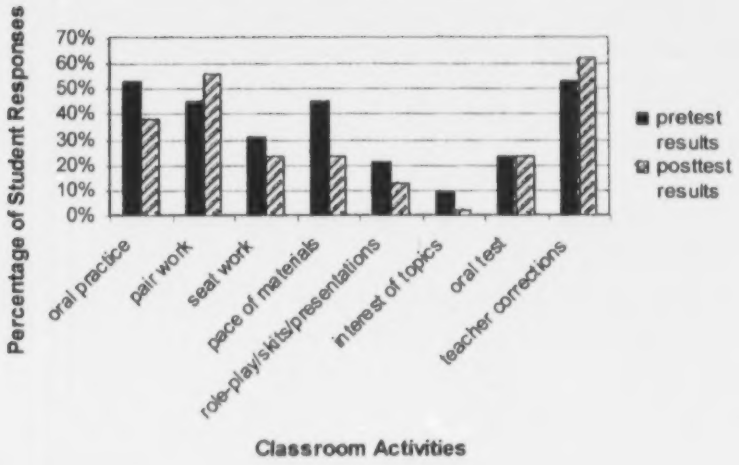

Figure 11. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School A, questions related to classroom activities which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 11 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to questions related to classroom activities that increase anxiety and frustration. The researchers found that in the pretest, 53% of the students felt anxiety and frustration through oral practice. The posttest results showed that 38% of the students felt anxiety and frustration through oral practice. In the pretest, 45% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when working with another student. In the posttest, 56% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when working with another student. In the area of the seat work, 31% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration in the pretest, while 23% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration in the posttest. The pace of curricular material was a factor for provoking anxiety and frustration for 45% of the students in the pretest. In the posttest, 23% of the students claimed that the pace of curricular material was a factor for anxiety and frustration. Twenty-one percent of the students in the pretest claimed that role-plays, skits and/or presentations were a cause of anxiety and

frustration for them. In the posttest, 13% of the students experienced feelings of anxiety and frustration about role-plays, skits and/or presentations. In the pretest, 9% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration when topics of interest were discussed. In the posttest, 2% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration when topics of interest were discussed. In the pretest, as well as in the posttest, 23% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration about being orally tested. In the pretest, 53% of the students experienced feelings of anxiety and frustration by being corrected by the teacher. In the posttest, 62% of the students experienced feelings of anxiety and frustration by being corrected by the teacher.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. In the area of oral practice, the researchers saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration from 53% in the pretest to 38% in the posttest. This was a decrease of 15 percentage points. There was an eight percentage point decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of seat work. In the pretest, 31% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration in the area of seat work, while in the posttest, 23% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration. The researchers saw a significant decrease from 45% in the pretest to 23% in the posttest for the pace of curricular material. This was an overall decrease of 22 percentage points. In the area of role-play, skits and/or presentations, the researchers found a decrease of eight percentage points of the respondents. In the pretest, 21% of the students indicated anxiety and frustration, whereas only 13% of the students indicated anxiety and frustration in the posttest. The most significant decrease was found in the area of interest of topics, where there was a decrease of seven percentage points were reflected by the respondents. The pretest indicated 9%, while the posttest indicated 2%. There was neither a decrease nor an increase in anxiety and frustration in the area

of oral testing. Pair work had an increase in anxiety and frustration from 45% in the pretest to 56% in the posttest, of the students who felt anxiety and frustration when working with another student. This was an increase of 11 percentage points.The questions related to oral testing indicated in the pretest and posttest that 23% of the students felt anxiety and frustration. There was a nine percentage point increase in the area of teacher corrections. This increased from 53% in the pretest to 62% in the posttest.

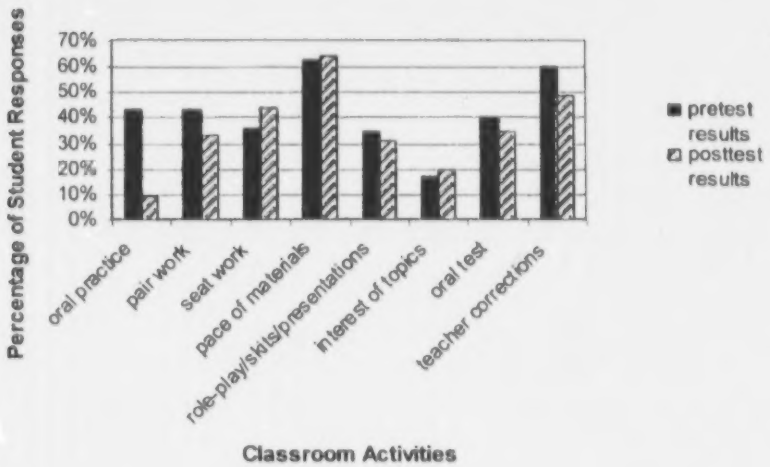

Figure 12. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School B, questions related to classroom activities which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 12 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to questions related to classroom activities which increase anxiety and frustration. The researchers found that in the pretest, 43% of the students felt anxiety and frustration through oral practice. The posttest results showed that 9% of the students felt anxiety and frustration through

oral practice. In the pretest, the researchers found that 43% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when working with another student. In the posttest, 33% of the students reported the same feelings of anxiety and frustration. In the area of seat work, 36% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration in the pretest, while 44% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration in the posttest. The pace of the curricular material was a factor for anxiety and frustration in 63% of the students in the pretest. In the posttest, 64% of the students claimed that the pace of the curricular material was a factor for anxiety and frustration. Thirty-five percent of the students in the pretest claimed that role-plays, skits, and/or presentations were a cause of anxiety for them. In the posttest, 31% of the students experienced feelings of anxiety and frustration about role-plays, skits, and/or presentations. In the pretest, 17% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration when topics of interest were discussed. In the posttest, 20% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration when topics of interest were discussed. In the pretest, 40% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration when they were orally tested. In the posttest, 35% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration when they were orally tested. In the pretest, 60% of the students expressed having anxiety and frustration when they were corrected by the teacher. In the posttest, 49% of the students expressed having anxiety and frustration when they were corrected by the teacher.

In March after the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. In the area of oral practice, the researchers saw a significant decrease in anxiety and frustration from 43% in the pretest to 9% in the posttest. Overall, this was a 34 percentage point decrease. Pair work also saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration from 43% in the pretest to 33% in the posttest. There was a decrease of 10 percentage points overall in anxiety and frustration reported by the

students regarding working in pairs. Being corrected by the teacher induced anxiety and frustration for 60% of the students in the pretest and dropped to 49% after the intervention in the posttest this revealed a decrease of 11 percentage points. The posttest results revealed a decrease from 35% of the students from the pretest to 31% of the students in the posttest regarding the performance of role-plays, skits, and/or presentations. This was an overall decrease of four percentage points. After the intervention, oral testing saw a decrease in frustration and anxiety from 40% in the pretest to 35% in the posttest. This was a decrease in anxiety and frustration by five percentage points. The area of seat work saw an increase in anxiety and frustration after the intervention from 36% in the pretest to 44% in the posttest. This was an eight percentage point increase in anxiety and frustration. Another area that increased in anxiety and frustration was the pace of curricular material. The pretest yielded a response of anxiety and frustration for 63% of the students and increased to 64% in the posttest, this was an increase of one percentage point. Finally, 17% of the students experienced having anxiety and frustration when topics of interest were discussed in the pretest and increased to 20% in the posttest. Overall, this was a three percentage point increase.

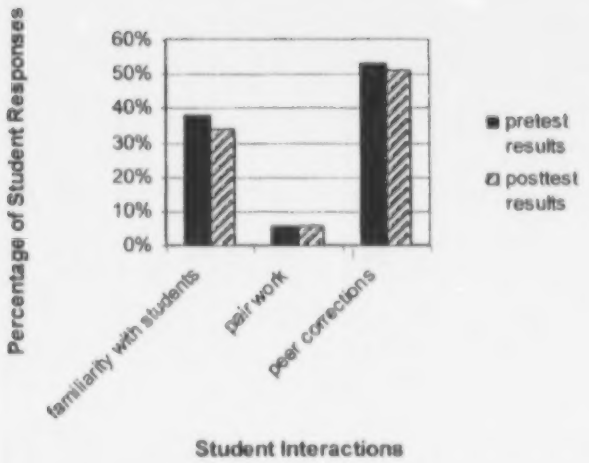

Figure 13. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School A, questions related to the type of student interactions which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 13 shows the pretest and the posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to questions related to student interactions which increased anxiety and frustration. The researchers found that in the pretest 38% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when familiarity with students was concerned. The posttest results showed that 34% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when familiarity with students was the main factor. In the pretest 6% of the students expressed feelings of frustration and anxiety when they were involved in pair work. According to the posttest results, 6% of the students expressed the anxiety when involved in pair work. In the area of peer corrections, the pretest showed that 53% of the students felt anxiety and frustration whereas in the posttest, 51% of the students expressed this response.

In March after the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers, familiarity with students saw a significant decrease in anxiety and frustration from 38% in the pretest to 34% in the posttest. Overall, this was a four percentage point decrease. Peer corrections also saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration from 53% in the pretest to 51% in the posttest. There

was an overall two percentage point decrease in anxiety and frustration reported by the students. The only area that did show neither an increase nor a decrease was the area of pair work. In both the pretest and the posttest 6% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration when doing pair work.

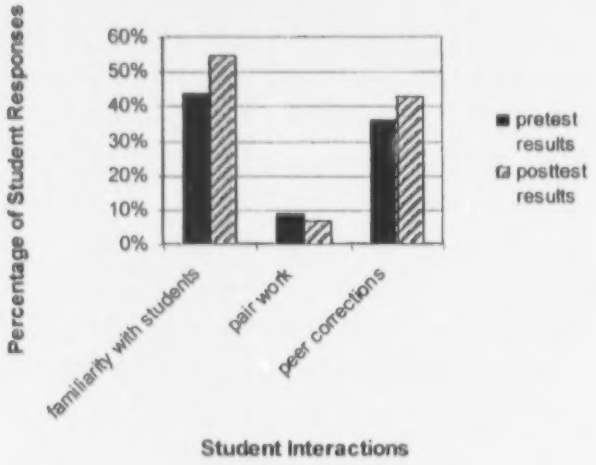

Figure 14. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School B, questions related to the type of student interactions which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 14 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to questions related to the type of student interactions which increase anxiety and frustration. In the pretest, the researchers found that 44% of the students felt anxiety and frustration regardless of their familiarity with the students and 55% in the posttest. With regards to working in pairs in the classroom, 9% of the students indicated feelings of anxiety and frustration in the pretest and 7% in the posttest. In the pretest, 36% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when their

fellow classmates were asked to correct their mistakes. In the posttest, 43% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when their fellow classmates were asked to correct their mistakes.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. Nine percent of the students in the pretest felt anxiety and frustration when doing activities in pairs and decreased to 7% in the posttest. This was a two percentage point decrease. In the pretest, the researchers found that 44% of the students felt anxiety and frustration regardless of their familiarity with the students increased to 55% in the posttest. Overall, this was an 11 percentage point increase. In the pretest, 36% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when their fellow classmates were asked to correct their mistakes and increased to 43% in the posttest. This was an increase of seven percentage points.

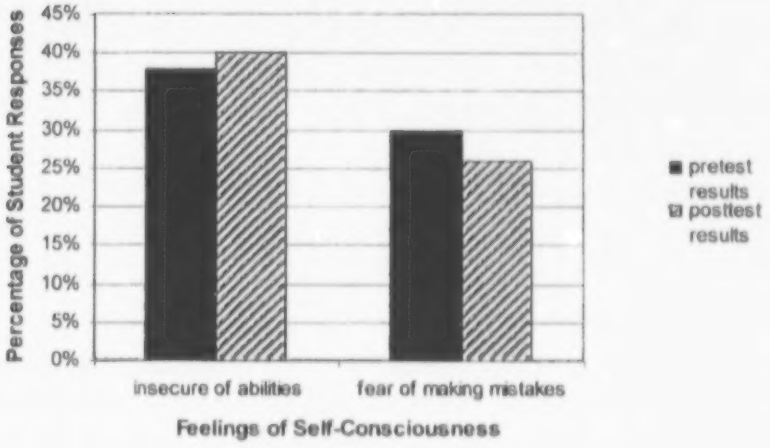

Figure 15. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School A, students' feelings of self-consciousness which increase student anxiety and frustration.

Figure 15 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to questions related to feelings of self-consciousness which increased anxiety and frustration. The researchers found that in the pretest 38% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when it concerned insecurity of abilities. The posttest results showed that 40% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when expressing their insecurities of abilities. Thirty percent of the students in the pretest claimed that fear if making mistakes was the cause of their frustration. In the posttest, 26% of the students responded that fear of making mistakes caused them anxiety and frustration.

In March after the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers, fear of making mistakes saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration form 30% in the pretest to 26% in the posttest. Overall, this was a decrease of four percentage points. Insecurity of abilities saw an increase in anxiety and frustration from 38% in the pretest to 40% in the posttest. This yielded a total increase of two percentage points.

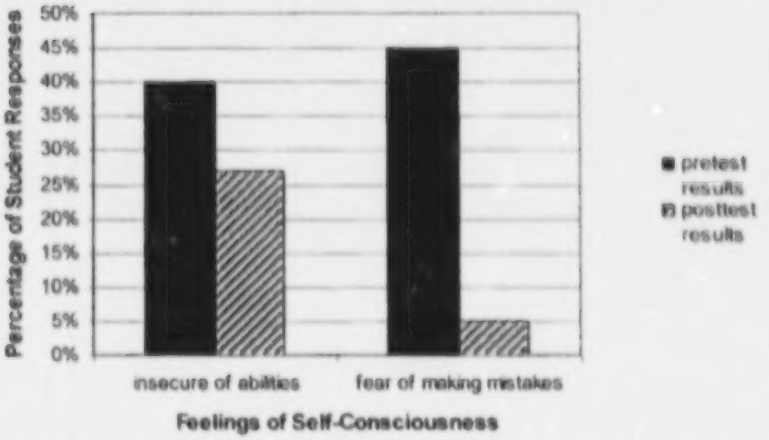

Figure 16. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School B, students' feelings of self-consciousness which increase student anxiety and frustration.

Figure 16 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to questions related to students' feelings of self-consciousness which increase anxiety and frustration. In the pretest, 40% of the students indicated that while they were fully aware of being assessed by the teacher, they were insecure about their responses in Spanish. In the posttest, 27% of the students indicated that while they were fully aware of being assessed by the teacher, they were insecure about their responses in Spanish. In the pretest, the researchers found that 45% of the students stated that making a mistake was a big deal that caused them to experience anxiety and frustration and 5% in the posttest.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. Forty percent of the students in the pretest indicated that while they were fully aware of being assessed by the teacher, they were insecure about their responses in Spanish. In the posttest, this decreased to 27% with an overall decrease by 13 percentage points of the

respondents. The most significant decrease was found with regards to the area of fear of making mistakes. In the pretest, 45% of students reported feelings of anxiety and frustration and dropped to 5% in the posttest. This was a decrease of 40 percentage points.

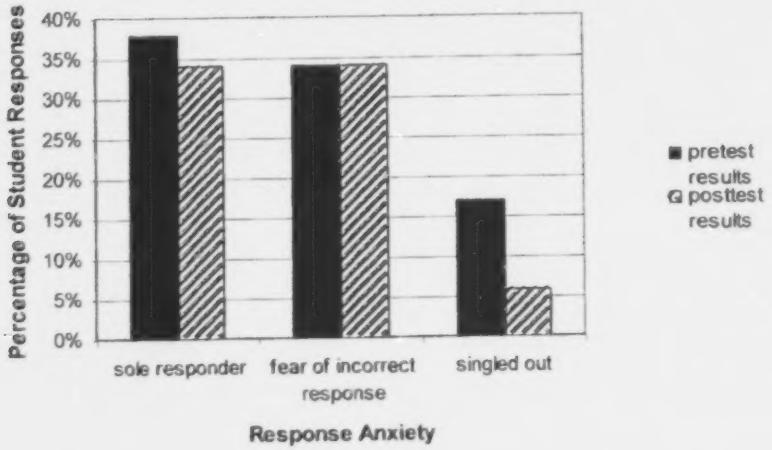

Figure 17. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School A, questions related to answering questions orally which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 17 shows the pretest and the posttest results before and after the intervention with regard to questions related to response anxiety. The researchers found that in the pretest 38% of the students felt anxiety when they were the sole responder to a question. The posttest indicated that 34% of the students felt anxiety when they were the sole responder. In the pretest 34% of the students expressed that they felt anxiety because they feared they would give and incorrect response. In the posttest, the same percentage of student response, 34%, was given. When student were felt singled out by the teacher, this caused 17% of the students to feel anxiety and frustration in the pretest whereas in the posttest, 6% expressed these same feelings.

In March after the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers, being the sole responder had a decrease of anxiety of four percentage points. This was reflected in the original 38% pretest response compared to the 34% posttest response. There was a significant decrease in student anxiety and frustration when the students expressed being singled out. In the pretest the students indicated that 17% of them felt anxiety when they were singled out whereas in the posttest only 6% responded that being singled out made them feel anxious. This was an overall decrease of 11 percentage points. The only area that did not show and increase nor a decrease was the area of fear of giving and incorrect response. In both the pretest and in the posttest 34% of the students expressed that this caused them frustration and anxiety.

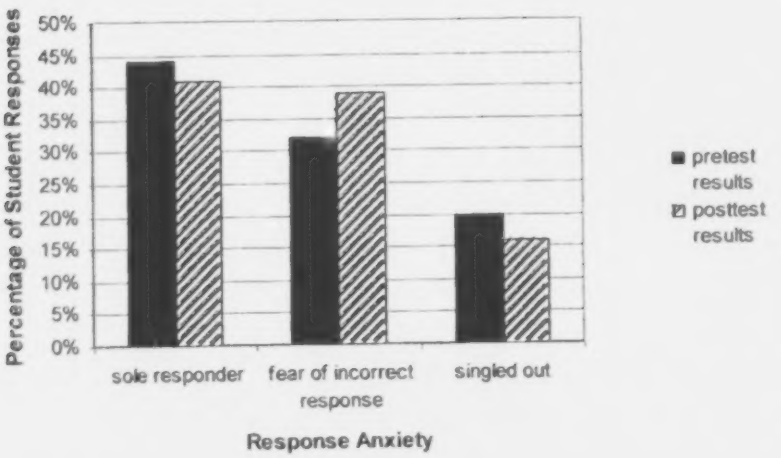

Figure 18. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School B, questions related to answering questions orally which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 18 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with questions related to answering questions orally which increase anxiety and frustration. In the

pretest, 44% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration when they were the only student raising their hand to answer a question in class, or sole responder. In the posttest, 41% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration. In the pretest, 32% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration by stating that they would not be willing to volunteer answers in class even if they were not afraid of giving an incorrect response. In the posttest, 39% of the students expressed this anxiety and frustration. In the pretest, 20% of the students reported that they felt anxiety and frustration when they were singled out and called on to answer a question rather than volunteering an answer. In the posttest, 16% of the students reported this anxiety and frustration when they were singled out and called on to answer a question rather than volunteering an answer.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. Twenty percent of the students reported that they felt anxiety and frustration when they were singled out and called on to answer a question rather than volunteering an answer. In the posttest, this decreased to 16% of the students showing a four percentage point decrease in anxiety and frustration overall. In the pretest, 44% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration when they were the only student raising their hand to answer a question in class, or sole responder. In the post, 41% of the students expressed these feelings of anxiety and frustration. This is an overall decrease of three percentage points of the respondents. In the pretest, 32% of the students expressed feelings of anxiety and frustration by stating that they would not be willing to volunteer answers in class even if they were not afraid of giving an incorrect response. In the posttest, this increased to 39% of the students showing an increase in anxiety and frustration by seven percentage points overall.

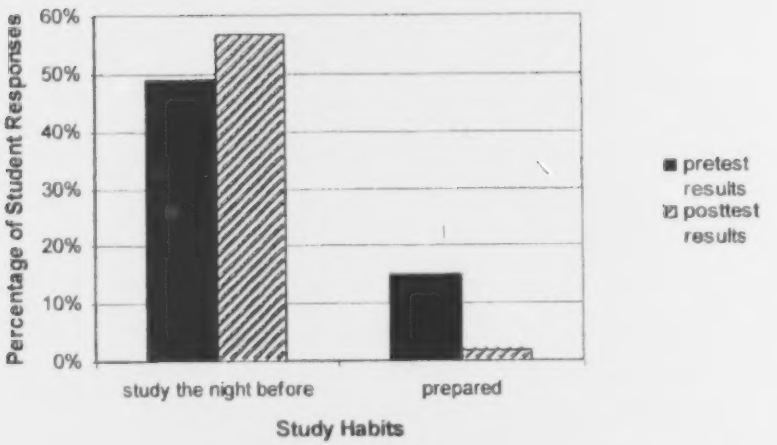

Figure 19. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School A, students' study habits which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 19 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to the questions related to study habits which increase anxiety and frustration. The researchers found that in the pretest, 49% of the students felt anxiety and frustration if they had not studied the night before. The posttest results showed that 57% of the students felt anxiety and frustration if they had not studied the night before. In the pretest, when students were prepared 15% of the students felt anxiety and frustration, whereas in the posttest, 2% of the students expressed anxiety and frustration.

In March after the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers, a significant decrease was noted by the researchers from 15% in the pretest to only 2% in the posttest when the students were prepared for class. This was a decrease of 13 percentage points. An increase of anxiety and frustration rose eight percentage points when students studied the night before, from 49% in the pretest to 57% in the posttest.

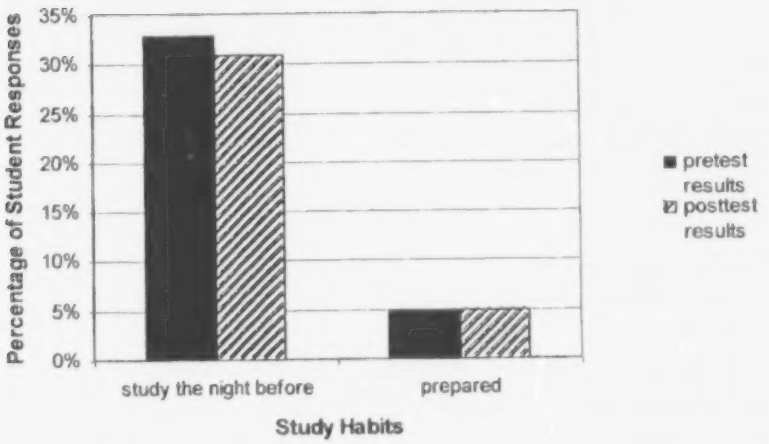

Figure 20. Pretest and posttest comparison of questionnaire for School B, students' study habits which increase anxiety and frustration.

Figure 20 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with questions related to students' habits which increase anxiety and frustration. In the pretest, 33% of the students reported feelings of general discomfort and anxiousness in class despite the fact that they had studied the night before. In the posttest, 31% of the students reported these feelings. In the pretest, 5% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when they had prepared for class night before on a daily basis. In the posttest, 5% reported the same feelings.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. In the pretest, 33% of the students reported feelings of general discomfort and anxiousness in class despite the fact that they had studied the night before. In the posttest, this decreased to 31% of the students showing an overall decrease of two percentage points. Both in the pretest and the posttest, 5% of the students felt anxiety and frustration when they had prepared for class night before on a daily basis. There was neither an increase nor a decrease.

The second method of assessment was a scale that was adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). It was modified from the original scale by discarding the "neutral" option, forcing the students to either agree or disagree with the statements from the scale. The students were forced to choose "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", or "strongly disagree" to thirty-three questions. The purpose of this scale was to measure the anxiety experienced by the students in several areas of the foreign language class. In the results the researchers combined the two categories of "strongly agree" and "agree", finding an average mean response percentage.

The scale was administered by the researchers in both school A and school B during the third week in March. In school A, 47 students participated in the research. In school B, 75 students participated in the research. The questionnaire contained the same 19 questions as the questionnaire administered in January. Responses to all FLCAS items are reported in Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6

Pretest and posttest results for FLCAS items for school A with percentages of students selecting each alternative, January 2002 and March 2002.

	SA*		A		D		SD	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	4**	9	32	21	45	40	6	15
2. I worry about making mistakes in language class.	11	11	34	34	26	21	11	19
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	0	2	15	9	34	38	43	38
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	13	6	15	13	26	40	30	21
5. It would bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	11	9	19	11	19	36	34	30
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	13	19	45	23	19	34	11	9
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	11	9	19	21	32	30	19	23
8. I am usually not at ease during tests in my language class.	13	15	28	17	28	32	19	17
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	19	6	26	28	30	36	13	4
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	28	30	28	11	17	26	13	19
11. I understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	23	23	26	21	11	30	15	11
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	6	13	21	26	36	30	23	17
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	6	11	11	9	28	30	38	32
14. I would be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	15	13	36	13	15	26	28	15
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	6	11	28	21	40	36	13	15
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	4	9	17	15	43	38	15	28

Table 6 results are continued on the following page, please see for the key.

Table 6 results are continued from the previous page.

	SA*		A		D		SD	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	17	17	23	13	32	32	13	19
18. I don't feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	6	4	21	19	53	30	13	23
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	6	6	23	17	47	32	11	28
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on my language class.	4	4	11	11	43	38	19	30
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	11	9	4	13	26	19	43	40
22. I feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	11	9	19	19	36	30	11	23
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	6	9	28	17	30	36	23	21
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	9	4	26	23	34	34	15	21
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	11	2	11	17	38	38	26	26
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	11	9	17	11	28	38	28	23
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	2	4	15	19	55	34	13	26
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel unsure and anxious.	0	2	4	4	40	34	32	47
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	4	2	19	17	38	34	19	28
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	30	13	32	28	34	21	8	17
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at my when I speak the foreign language.	4	0	17	17	30	32	19	34
32. I would not feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	11	15	36	36	26	19	26	11
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	17	11	34	23	32	30	6	19

*SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

**Data in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 7

Pretest and posttest results for FLCAS items for school B with percentages of students selecting each alternative, January 2002 and March 2002.

	SA*		A		D		SD	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	8**	7	33	28	45	43	8	17
2. I worry about making mistakes in language class.	19	13	40	33	24	31	11	16
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	7	4	19	16	41	40	29	37
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	13	9	19	24	37	43	25	23
5. It would bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	8	11	21	20	35	29	29	35
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	9	8	32	31	41	37	5	17
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	5	5	27	23	44	37	19	27
8. I am usually not at ease during tests in my language class.	7	8	25	19	47	43	13	24
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	8	8	35	23	40	41	12	21
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	19	19	32	27	19	29	11	19
11. I understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	24	17	41	37	21	23	11	15
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	7	8	28	20	35	37	12	29
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1	1	11	15	48	44	35	35
14. I would be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	8	12	17	29	37	35	32	19
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	7	3	4	31	40	37	44	24
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	4	4	27	16	33	37	31	37

Table 7 results are continued on the following page, please see for the key.

Table 7 results are continued from the previous page.

	SA*		A		D		SD	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	7	5	15	21	29	33	44	36
18. I don't feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	4	3	21	24	44	37	25	29
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	7	4	25	13	39	47	31	32
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on my language class.	8	4	17	12	37	47	32	33
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	7	5	4	8	40	43	44	39
22. I feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	8	3	11	24	56	37	19	28
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	11	4	20	20	45	40	19	31
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	12	4	27	27	41	41	15	24
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	15	7	15	9	39	44	27	33
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	7	3	21	24	37	36	29	32
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	4	3	25	11	37	55	27	27
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel unsure and anxious.	3	0	11	15	37	33	44	43
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	4	7	20	17	36	45	19	25
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	9	5	29	32	39	40	15	17
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at my when I speak the foreign language.	4	3	17	12	32	49	37	29
32. I would not feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	12	13	48	43	28	32	3	5
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	27	7	47	37	19	25	16	21

*SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

**Data in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The researchers grouped questions 1, 9, 18, 24, and 27, in that they share common elements related to speaking. In the pretest mean of 32%, the students from school A (Table 6) agreed that there was fear or anxiety, panic without preparation, lack of confidence when speaking individually or in front of others, and nervousness and confusion in the foreign language classroom. In the posttest mean of 27%, the students in school A (Table 6) agreed. In the pretest mean of 35%, the students from school B (Table 7) agreed that there was fear or anxiety, panic without preparation, lack of confidence when speaking individually or in front of others, and nervousness and confusion in the foreign language classroom. In the posttest mean of 28%, the students in school B (Table 7) agreed. In reference to mistakes and corrections, questions 2, 15, and 19, it was found in the pretest mean that 37% of the students and in the posttest mean, 33% of the students from school A said that they worried about making mistakes in the class, or worried that the teacher was ready to correct every mistake, and became upset when they did not understand what the teacher was correcting. In the pretest mean of 37%, the students and in the posttest mean of 32%, the students from school B said that they worried about making mistakes in the class, or worried that the teacher was ready to correct every mistake, and became upset when they did not understand what the teacher was correcting. In the pretest mean of 24%, students and in the posttest mean of 21%, the students from school A expressed fear of not understanding the teacher and/or the spoken word, even if they were well prepared, questions 4, 16, and 29. In the pretest mean of 29%, the students and in the posttest mean of 26%, the students from school B expressed fear of not understanding the teacher and/or the spoken word, even if they were well prepared, questions 4, 16, and 29. By grouping questions 7, 13, 23, 25, and 31, it was found in the pretest mean, that 25% of the students and in the posttest mean of

22%, the students from school A felt less competent than others, with feelings of self-doubt, feelings of embarrassment or being laughed at, worried about the pace of the class, or being negatively evaluated. In the pretest mean of 30%, the students and in the posttest mean of 20%, the students from school B felt less competent than others, with feelings of self-doubt, feelings of embarrassment or being laughed at, worried about the pace of the class, or being negatively evaluated. Trembling, heart palpitations, forgetfulness, confusion, nervousness, and uneasiness were reactions in the pretest mean of 31%, the students and in the posttest mean of 28%, the students from school A indicated that they had felt in their foreign language class indicated through questions 3, 8, 10, 12, 20, 21, and 33. In the pretest mean of 37%, the students and in the posttest mean of 28%, the students from school B indicated that they had felt in their foreign language class indicated through questions 3, 8, 10, 12, 20, 21, and 33. One of the highest percentages was indicated by the students' attitudes towards their foreign language class. In the pretest mean of 43%, the students and in the posttest mean of 33%, the students from school A said that they would not like to take more foreign language classes, they could not remain focused in class, could not empathize with others' frustrations, had a lack of desire to attend, and had pressure to prepare for language class. In the pretest mean of 57%, the students and in the posttest mean of 35%, the students from school B said that they would not like to take more foreign language classes, they could not remain focused in class, could not empathize with others' frustrations, had a lack of desire to attend, and had pressure to prepare for language class. This data was gathered through questions 5, 6, 11, 17, and 22. In the responses to questions 14 and 32, the anxiety when dealing with native speakers, the pretest mean indicated that 49% of the students and in the posttest mean, 39% of the students from school A felt nervous speaking the

foreign language in front of native speakers. In the pretest mean of 43%, the students and in the posttest mean, 49% of the students from school B felt nervous speaking the foreign language in front of native speakers. Although all of the questions dealt with anxiety in the foreign language classroom, it was found through questions 26, 28, and 30 that there was a distinct foreign language anxiety that was different from other forms of anxiety. This is evidenced in the responses of the pretest mean where 32% of the students and in the posttest mean where 22% of the students from school A felt more tense and nervous in the foreign language class than in other classes, experienced anxiousness even before their arrival to foreign language class, and felt overwhelmed by the number of rules they needed to know in order to speak in the foreign language. In both the pretest mean and the posttest mean, 26% of the students from school B felt more tense and nervous in the foreign language class than in other classes, experienced anxiousness even before their arrival to foreign language class, and felt overwhelmed by the number of rules they needed to know in order to speak in the foreign language.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. The questions related to speaking showed an overall five percentage point decrease from a reported 32% in the pretest to 27% in the posttest for school A. The questions related to speaking showed an overall seven percentage point decrease from a reported 35% in the pretest to 28% in the posttest for school B. In reference to mistakes and corrections, an overall four percentage point decrease from a reported 37% in the pretest to 33% in the posttest for school A. In reference to mistakes and corrections, an overall five percentage point decrease from a reported 37% in the pretest to 32% in the posttest for school B. In the pretest, 24% of students and in the posttest 21% of the students from school A expressed fear of not understanding the

teacher and/or the spoken word, even if they were well prepared, showing a decrease of three percentage points. In the pretest, 29% of the students and 26% of the students from school B expressed fear of not understanding the teacher and/or the spoken word, even if they were well prepared, showing a decrease of three percentage points. In the questions dealing with competency, embarrassment, pace, and evaluation, there was a three percentage point decrease from the pretest at 25% to the posttest at 22% for school A. In the questions dealing with competency, embarrassment, pace and evaluation, there was a 10 percentage point decrease from the pretest at 30% to the posttest at 20% for school B. The questions dealing with physical and psychological reactions such as trembling, heart palpitations, forgetfulness, confusion, nervousness, and uneasiness, school A showed a three percentage point decrease from the pretest of 31% to 28% in the posttest. The questions dealing with physical and psychological reactions such as trembling, heart palpitations, forgetfulness, confusion, nervousness, and uneasiness, school B showed a nine percentage point decrease from the pretest of 37% to 28% in the posttest. In the pretest, 43% of the students and in the posttest, 33% of the students from school A said that they would not like to take more foreign language classes, they could not remain focused in class, could not empathize with others' frustrations, had a lack of desire to attend, and had pressure to prepare for language class. This was a 10 percentage point decrease. In the pretest, 57% of the students and in the posttest, 35% of the students from school B said that they would not like to take more foreign language classes, they could not remain focused in class, could not empathize with others' frustrations, had a lack of desire to attend, and had pressure to prepare for language class. This was a 22 percentage point decrease. The questions dealing with native speakers showed a 10 percentage point decrease from the pretest of 49% to the posttest of 39%

for school A. The questions dealing with native speakers showed a six percentage point increase from the pretest of 43% to the posttest of 49% for school B. In the questions related to distinct foreign language anxiety, the pretest showed 32% and the posttest showed 22%, this was an overall decrease of 10 percentage points for school A. In the questions related to distinct foreign language anxiety, the pretest showed 26% and the posttest showed 26%, this was neither an increase nor a decrease for school B.

The third method of assessment was an interview. The purpose of the interview was to identify anxiety felt by the subjects in their Spanish class. The interview created by the researchers was given to a random sample of five subjects per class from five beginning first year Spanish classes. The students were selected from the alphabetical class lists where every fifth student was chosen. A summary of the results from the interview from schools A and B are located in Table 8.

Table 8

Pretest and posttest results for student interview schools A & B, January 2002 and March 2002.

Anxiety Provoking Items	Percentage of Responses School A 10 Students		Percentage of Responses School B 15 Students	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Tests / Quizzes	80	60	53	13
Being called on without hand raised	30	20	27	20
Word pronunciation	0	20	7	7
Oral test	n/a	n/a	20	20
Presentation / Skit	50	20	20	13
Student preparation	30	20	0	0
Do not comprehend	20	20	0	0

Data in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding and the opportunity for multiple responses from each individual.

Table 8 shows the pretest and posttest results before and after the intervention with regards to the student interview at school A. All of the 10 students that were interviewed from school A shared feelings of anxiety and frustration in the Spanish foreign language classroom. With regards to tests and quizzes together, the 80% of the students reported anxiety and frustration in the pretest and 60% in the posttest. In the pretest, 50% of those interviewed expressed that presentations and skits with a group or partner in front of the class tended to be very stressful and difficult. In the posttest, 20% of the students reported this frustration. Being called on by the teacher without having a hand raised was reported by 30% of the students as being an anxiety provoker. Twenty percent of the students reported these same feelings in the posttest. In the pretest and the posttest, two students or 20% of the interviewees shared feelings that situations had occurred where they did not understand the happenings of class. Thirty percent of the students in the pretest and 20% of the students to the posttest reported that they felt anxious when they were not prepared for class. In the pretest, there were no students that reported issues of anxiety and frustration towards word pronunciation, however, there were two students or 20% of the interviewees reported this anxiety in the posttest.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. With regards to tests and quizzes together, 80% of the students at school A reported anxiety and frustration in the pretest and 60% in the posttest. This was a 20 percentage point decrease overall. In the pretest, 50% of those interviewed expressed that presentations and skits with a group or partner in front of the class tended to be very stressful and difficult. In the posttest, 20% of the students reported this frustration. This was significant decrease of 30

percentage point. Being called on by the teacher without having a hand raised was reported in the pretest by 30% of the students as being an anxiety provoker. Twenty percent of the students reported these same feelings in the posttest. There was a decrease of 10 percentage points in respondents. In the pretest and the posttest, two students or 20% of the interviewees shared feelings that situations had occurred where they did not understand the happenings of class. There was neither an increase nor a decrease from the pretest to the posttest in the students' responses. Thirty percent of the students in the pretest and 20% of the students to the posttest reported that they felt anxious when they were not prepared for class. There was a 10 percentage point decrease from the pretest to the posttest. In the pretest, there were no students that reported issues of anxiety and frustration towards word pronunciation, however, there were two students or 20% of the interviewees reported this anxiety in the posttest. This was reported through a 20 percentage point increase.

All of the 15 students that were interviewed from school B (Table 8) shared feelings of anxiety and frustration in the Spanish foreign language classroom. With regards to tests and quizzes together, 53% of the students reported anxiety and frustration in the pretest and 13% in the posttest. In the pretest, 20% of those interviewed expressed that presentations and skits with a group or partner in front of the class tended to be very stressful and difficult. In the posttest, 13% of the students reported this frustration. Being called on by the teacher without having a hand raised was reported by 27% of the students as being an anxiety provoker. Twenty percent of the students reported these same feelings in the posttest. In the pretest and the posttest, none of the interviewees shared feelings that situations had occurred where they did not understand the happenings of class. In the pretest and the posttest, none of the students reported that they felt

anxious when they were not prepared for class. In the pretest and the posttest, 7% of the students reported issues of anxiety and frustration towards word pronunciation.

In March after the intervention the posttest was administered to the students by the researchers. With regards to tests and quizzes together, 53% of the students from school B, reported anxiety and frustration in the pretest and 13% in the posttest. This was a significant decrease of 40 percentage points overall. In the pretest, 20% of those interviewed expressed that presentations and skits with a group or partner in front of the class tended to be very stressful and difficult. In the posttest, 13% of the students reported this frustration. There was a seven percentage point decrease from the pretest to the posttest. Being called on by the teacher without having a hand raised was reported by 27% of the students as being an anxiety provoker. Twenty percent of the students reported these same feelings in the posttest. There was an overall seven percentage point decrease in students' responses. In the pretest and the posttest, none of the interviewees shared feelings that situations had occurred where they did not understand the happenings of class. In the pretest and the posttest, none of the students reported that they felt anxious when they were not prepared for class. In the pretest and the posttest, 7% of the students reported issues of anxiety and frustration towards word pronunciation. There was neither an increase nor a decrease from the pretest to the posttest.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the data from both schools A and B, the interventions of introducing the study guide tips for studying a foreign language as a learning tool, implementing partner/group presentations and/or skits and activities, and group oral reading activities were

successful in helping students cope with foreign language anxiety and frustration as well as practicing the foreign language through multiple contexts.

The student questionnaire data from the pretest and the posttest for schools A and B demonstrated an overall decrease in student levels of anxiety and frustration in the area of classroom activities. In classroom activities, school A saw decreases in anxiety and frustration in the areas of oral practice, seat work, pace of curricular materials, role-plays, skits and/or presentations, and topics of interest. School A saw increases in anxiety and frustration, however, in the areas of pair work and teacher corrections. The area of oral testing saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration. In classroom activities, school B saw decreases in anxiety and frustration in the areas of oral practice, pair work, role-plays, skits and/or presentations, oral testing, and teacher corrections. School B saw increases in anxiety and frustration, however, in the areas of seat work, pace of curricular materials, and topics of interest.

The student questionnaire data from the pretest and the posttest for schools A and B demonstrated an overall decrease in anxiety and frustration in student interactions. In student interactions, school A saw decreases in anxiety and frustration in the areas of familiarity with students and peer corrections. School A saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of pair work, but school B saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration, however, in pair work. School B saw increases in anxiety and frustration in the areas of familiarity with students and peer corrections.

The student questionnaire data from the pretest and the posttest for schools A and B demonstrated an overall decrease in anxiety and frustration in feelings of self-consciousness. Feelings of self-consciousness for school A saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area

of fear of making mistakes, but an increase in anxiety and frustration in the area of insecurity of students' abilities. Feelings of self-consciousness for school B saw decreases in anxiety and frustration in both areas of fear of making mistakes and insecurity of students' abilities.

The student questionnaire data from the pretest and the posttest for schools A and B demonstrated an overall decrease in anxiety and frustration in response anxiety. In response anxiety, school A saw decreases in anxiety and frustration in the areas of sole responder and singled out. School A saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of fear of incorrect responses. In response anxiety, school B saw decreases in anxiety and frustration in the areas of sole responder and singled out. School B, however, saw an increase in anxiety and frustration in the area of fear of incorrect responses.

The student questionnaire data from the pretest and the posttest for schools A and B demonstrated an overall decrease in study habits that provoke foreign language anxiety and frustration. In study habits, school A saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of preparation, but an increase in anxiety and frustration in the area of studying the night before, but saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration in study habits in the area of studying the night before, but saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of preparation.

Based on the analysis of the data collected from the FLCAS, from both schools A and B, introducing the study guide tips for studying a foreign language as a learning tool, implementing partner/group presentations and/or skits and activities, and group oral reading activities help students cope with foreign language anxiety and frustration, as well as practice the foreign language through multiple contexts. The FLCAS data from the pretest and the posttest

demonstrated an overall decrease in anxiety and frustration. In the area of speaking in the foreign language schools A and B both saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration. In the area of making mistakes and receiving corrections, both schools A and B saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration. In the area of fear of not understanding the teacher and/or spoken word both schools A and B saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration. Other decreases in anxiety and frustration were found in both schools A and B in areas dealing with competency, embarrassment, pace of curricular material, evaluation. In the area physical and psychological reactions, both schools A and B found decreases in anxiety and frustration. When dealing with native speakers, school A saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration, but school B saw an increase in anxiety and frustration. In the area of distinct foreign language anxiety, school A saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration, but school B saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration.

Based on the analysis of the data collected from the student interview (Appendix B), from both schools A and B, introducing the study guide tips for studying a foreign language as a learning tool, implementing partner/group presentations and/or skits and activities, and group oral reading activities help students cope with foreign language anxiety and frustration, as well as practice the foreign language through multiple contexts. The researchers were able to detect an increase in positive attitudes toward participation in classroom activities and partner/group work demonstrated by the students. This was evidenced in an ease of communication in the foreign language between the students and the teachers without direct teacher instigation, by an increase in hands being raised to questions, and a greater willingness to try activities where there were risks involved. In the area of tests and quizzes both schools A and B saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration. In the area of being called on without their hand raised, both schools A

and B saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration. In the area of word pronunciation school A saw an increase in anxiety and frustration, but school B saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration. In the area of oral testing, though school A did not orally test their students, school B saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration. Both schools A and B saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of presentations and/or skits. School A saw a decrease in anxiety and frustration in the area of student preparation, but school B saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration. For students who did not comprehend, schools A and B saw neither an increase nor a decrease in anxiety and frustration.

The researchers sought to decrease anxiety and frustration in the Spanish classroom by enabling the students with tips for studying a foreign language, implementing specific activities intended to lessen anxiety and frustration while speaking, reading or writing Spanish, and by creating a non-threatening teaching environment and climate. TPR and authentic correction were also used to help the students cope with foreign language anxiety and frustration as well as practice the foreign language through multiple contexts. Overall, the researchers were moderately successful after the intervention in decreasing the anxiety and frustration felt by their students before the intervention from January 2002 through March 2002.

In reviewing the intervention process, the researchers recommend using all three of the tools for gathering data, the student questionnaire (Appendix A), the FLCAS, and the student interview (Appendix B), with limited modifications. Another recommendation is to explain to the students what anxiety and frustration are, along with the signs and symptoms associated with anxiety and frustration. The researchers also recommend that this intervention should be

implemented at the start of the school year to attempt to reduce students' anxiety and frustration levels early on in the school year to promote a non-threatening classroom atmosphere. It is also recommended that this intervention should be an extended period of time longer than a two and a half month or ten week time frame.

For the student questionnaire (Appendix A), the researchers recommend that a possible student response option be included near the end of the questionnaire stating: "I have no stress or anxiety." It is predicted that by adding this option, it may alleviate some of the repeated written student comments on the individual questionnaires. Another recommendation would be to revise the questionnaire to one's own specific school, specific classes, and one's own activities. This would allow a more personalized indication of one's own students' anxiety and frustration levels, and focus on where to begin one's own intervention.

In reference to the FLCAS the researchers modified this scale to take out the "neutral" option so as to force the students to "agree" or "disagree" with each statement. One should be for warned that the students may not have a clear understanding, personal experiences or prior knowledge of what "anxiety" encompasses at the middle school level.

The researchers' recommendations for the student interview (Appendix B) are to choose students at different learning levels, such as higher level students, average students, lower level students, and, if possible, native speakers of the foreign language or students with prior personal knowledge and/or experiences with the language and/or culture. By interviewing students at different learning levels one can gain an understanding of various degrees of anxiety that students may experience. Another recommendation for the student interview would be to include the direct question "Do you personally have anxiety about your Spanish class?" By

asking this question at least the interviewer is giving the interviewees the option of stating that they either have or do not have anxiety and frustration.

The intervention was divided into two categories, student and teachers. The first student element of the intervention included a study skills guide to studying a foreign language. The researchers highly recommend the use of this study skills guide since it provided quick, useful and concise information that the students could implement in to practice immediately. The researchers also recommend that this study skills guide be distributed within the first week of classes at the start of the school year.

The second student element of the intervention included partner and group presentations, skits and activities. The researchers recommend that similar activities be implemented early on in the school year, in order to provide the students with opportunities to work cooperatively, gain interpersonal communication skills and use the language orally in a inviting atmosphere.

The third student element of the intervention included group oral reading activities. The researchers recommend that these activities be implemented early on in the school year, but also challenge the students at their comprehension levels and continually reinforce the practice of reading in the target language. The researchers recommend a variety of topics including Hispanic culture, noteworthy people, music, art, geography or other related topics.

The first teacher element of the intervention was the inclusion of the use of total physical response (TPR). The researchers highly recommend the use of TPR in daily routines of teaching. The use of TPR helps to explain vocabulary, context of sentences, and other general information. It allows one to use the target language by motions, gestures, and pantomimes instead of resorting back and translating to the English language.

The second teacher element of the intervention was authentic correction. Authentic correction is used when the teacher corrects what a student has said incorrectly, by rephrasing the idea so that the idea is grammatically correct and complete. These corrections by the teacher should be said in a conversational manner and in a non-threatening way. The researchers highly recommend the daily use of this technique.

The third teacher element of the intervention was the creation of a non-threatening teaching environment and climate. The researchers defend the fact that the students need to be valued and appreciated in their work, words, effort, and activities. The researchers recommend using all of the above stated student and teacher elements of the study skills guide, partner/group activities, group reading activities, TPR, and authentic correction, which when intertwined can weave the ideal classroom learning non-threatening environment and climate.

In conclusion, the posttest data indicated a successful decrease in anxiety and frustration from both schools A and B from the pretest data. The posttest data indicated that the students were able to identify their own feelings of anxiety and frustration, and were able to gain self-confidence by their willingness to risk revealing themselves by speaking Spanish in the presence of other students as well as the teacher. The students showed a lower degree of test anxiety, communication apprehension, and fear of negative evaluation in the classroom. The students of the seventh grade foreign language Spanish classrooms exhibited less anxiety and frustration after the intervention in the area of oral communication, which hindered their full acquisition of the Spanish language.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Student Questionnaire of Anxiety

Student Questionnaire of Anxiety

Please answer all questions or statements with the appropriate answers. Circle yes or no, use the lines provided to write answers on, and check all answers that would apply.

1. I would feel more confident about speaking in class if we practiced speaking more.
   Yes No Why?

_____

_____

2. I would feel less self-conscious about speaking in class in front of others if I knew them better.
   Yes No

3. I feel very relaxed in class when I have studied a great deal the night before for

   ☐ a test ☐ a quiz

   ☐ a presentation ☐ other _____

4. I am less anxious in class when I am not the only person with my hand raised when answering a question.
   Yes No

5. I think I can speak Spanish pretty well, but when I know I am being graded, I mess up.
   Yes No

6. I would be more willing to volunteer answers in class if I weren't so afraid of saying the wrong thing.
   Yes No

7. I enjoy class when we work in pairs for

   ☐ written assignments ☐ oral communication activities

   ☐ presentations ☐ conversations

   ☐ other _____

8. I feel more comfortable in class when I don't have to get in front of the class

   ☐ to go to the board ☐ conversations

   ☐ presentation ☐ other _____

9. I would get less upset about my class if we did not have to cover so much material in such a short period of time.
   Yes No

10. I enjoy class when we do skits in class.
Yes No Why?

_____

_____

11. I feel comfortable in class when I come to class prepared.
Yes No

12. I like going to class when we are going to role play situations or do presentations.
Yes No

13. I would not be so self-conscious about speaking in class if it were commonly understood that everyone makes mistakes, and it were not such a big deal to make a mistake.
Yes No Why?

_____

_____

14. I prefer to be allowed to volunteer an answer instead of being called on to give an answer.
Yes No

15. I am more willing to participate in class when the topics we discuss are interesting.
Yes No

16. I would be less nervous about taking an oral test in Spanish if I got more practice speaking in class.
Yes No

17. I enjoy class when I can work with another student.
Yes No Why?

_____

_____

18. I would feel uncomfortable if the instructor never corrected our mistakes in class.
Yes No

19. I feel uneasy when my fellow students are asked to correct my mistakes in class.
Yes No Why?

_____

_____

Adapted from An Investigation of Students' Perspectives on Anxiety and Speaking (Young, 1990).

Appendix B

Student Interview

Student Interview

1. What makes you anxious about Spanish class?

2. What would make you less anxious about Spanish class?

3. Describe an incident or situation that caused you great anxiety in Spanish class.

Appendix C

Overhead "Tic-tac-toe" School A
*Caracteristicas fisicas
*Caracteristicas de la personalidad
Overhead "Tic-tac-toe" School B
*Desayuno y almuerzo
*Cena

¿Cómo eres tú?

alto__	bajo__	rubio__
delgado__	gordo__	pelirrojo_
moreno __	atlético__	inteligente_

¿Quién tiene?

pelo rubio__	pelo castaño__	pelo negro_
pelo rojo__	ojos verdes__	ojos cafés_
ojos azules__	ojos negros__	dientes_

desayuno y almuerzo

el cereal__	el sandwich__	la hamburguesa
las frutas__	el pan tostado__	el huevo__
la ensalada__	las papas fritas__	el tomate__

cena

el pescado__	el bistec__	el arroz__
el pan__	la sopa de verduras__	el pollo__
la sopa de tomate__	las papas al horno__	las verduras_

Appendix D

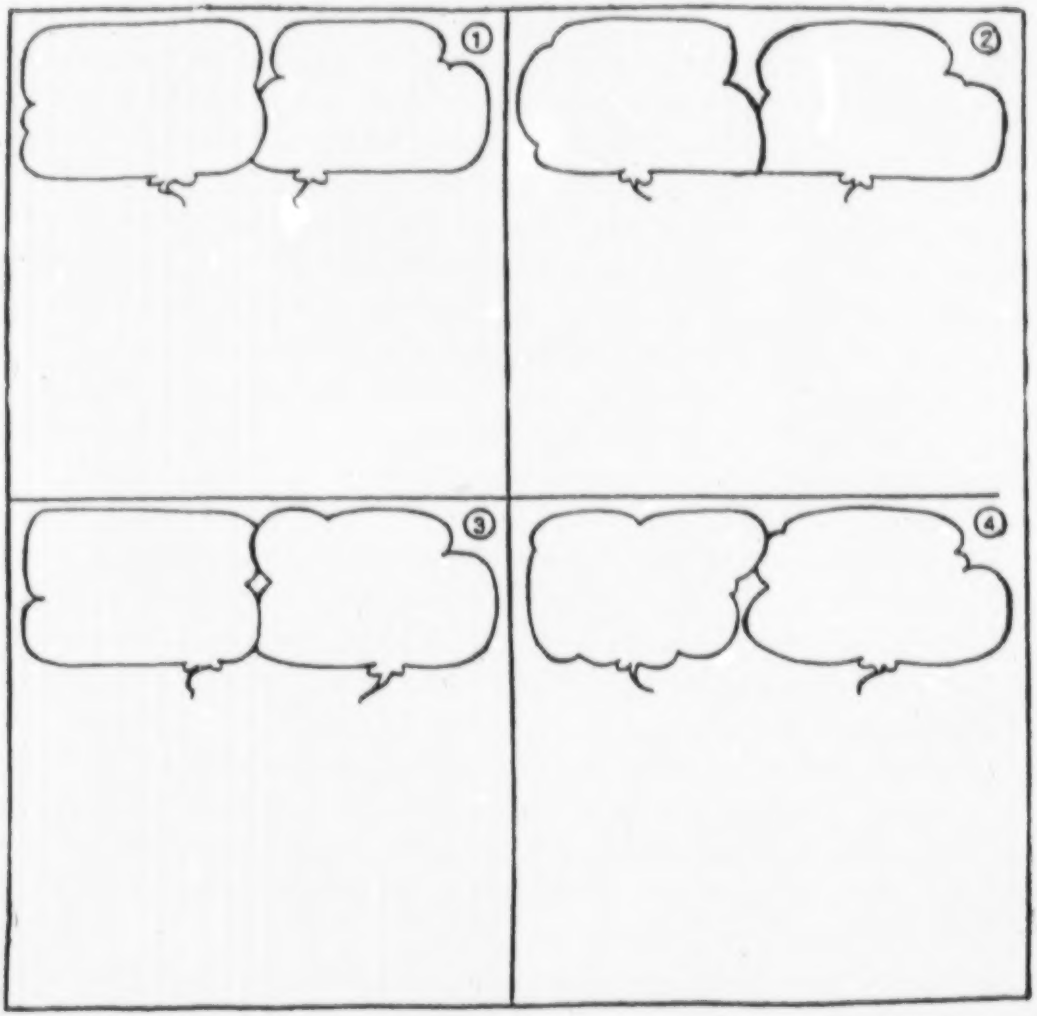
Partner Activity "Caricatura" (cartoon character dialogue)
School A
Partner Activity "Caricatura" (cartoon character dialogue)
School B

Nombre_____
Clase ___ Fecha _____

Caricaturas - Cartoons

1. Say "Hello" y saludos en la escuela
2. Ask someone what they look like (hair or eye color), answer
3. Ask them if they are tall or short, answer
4. Say that it was nice talking and then goodbyes

(The drawings & scenery must look like the conversation!)

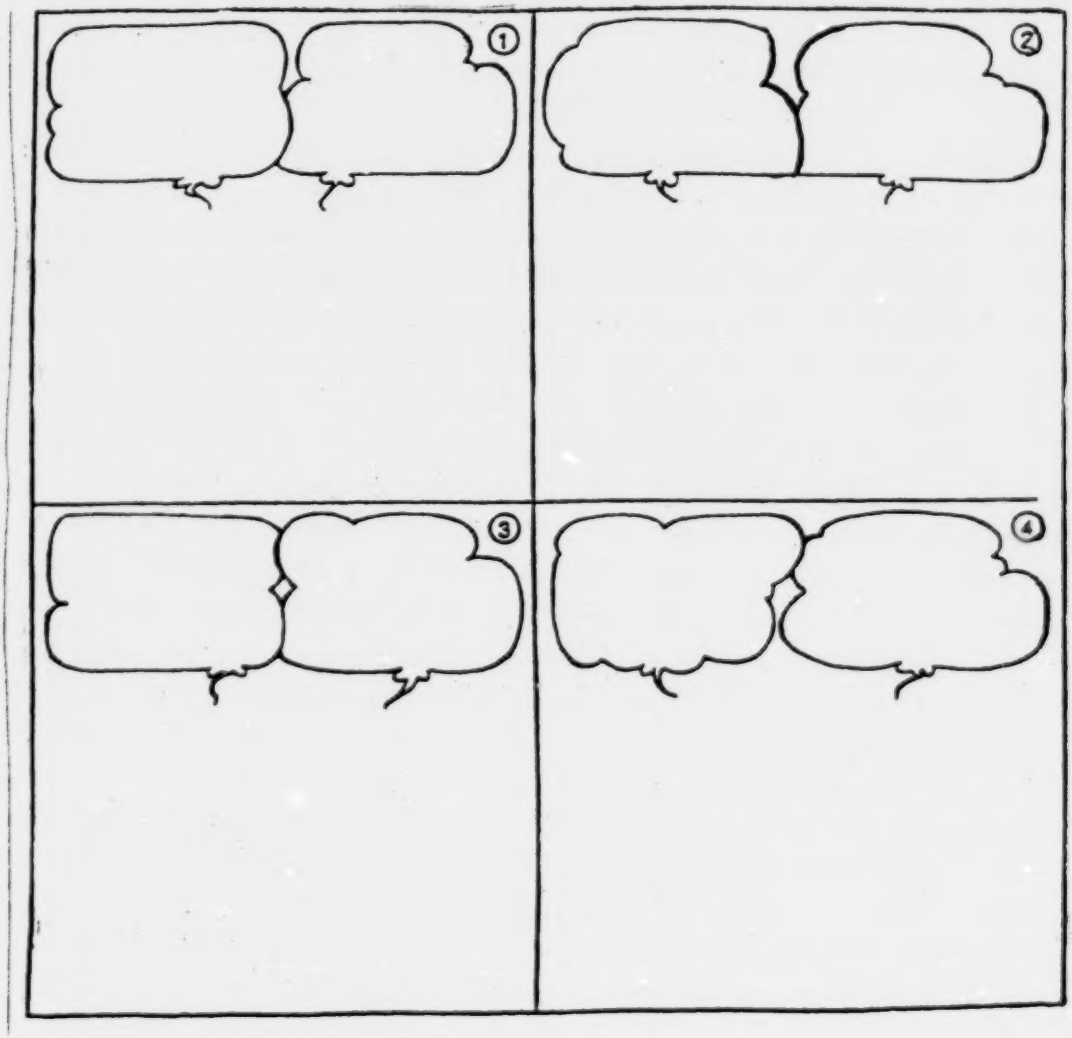


Nombre_____
Clase ___ Fecha _____

Caricaturas - Cartoons

1. Say "Hello" y saludos en la cafetería
2. Ask someone what they like to eat, answer
3. Ask them what they don't like to eat, answer
4. Tell each other something that is good for your health to eat, goodbyes

(The drawings & scenery must look like the conversation!)



Appendix E

Partner/Group Presentation Guidelines Choice A and Choice B "Proyecto de Descripciones"
Teacher Grading Rubric "Presentación de Descripciones"
School A
Partner/Group Presentation Guidelines "Vamos a un restaurante méxicano"
Teacher Grading Rubric "Presentación de Comida"
School B

Projecto de Descripción

You and your friend Lupe are having a great time at a local amusement part when suddenly you see a caricature artist booth. After speaking with the artist, he tells you that you have the choice of describing a friend or relative for him to draw. Both you and the friend you are with must take turns with the description making sure that you describe the person's physical and personality characteristics. While you are describing, the artist will be creating your masterpiece according to your specification.

- You and your friend must decide what you want and who you would like a caricature of.
- Greet the artist and introduce yourselves.
- Tell the artist whom you will be describing.
- Both of you take turns giving the description using personality and physical traits (five physical traits and five personality traits)
- The artist must ask at least four questions to clarify the information during the description process and finally ask you if you are pleased with the final product.
- Respond to the artist, ask the final price and then say good bye! (Please make sure that you have the written dialog ready to hand in.)

Here is your opportunity to use your creativity, Spanish skills, and pure ingeniousness!! Have fun and use your imagination…all in Spanish of course.

Proyecto de Descripción

Situación: Your best friend has found the perfect dream date for you! All you need to do is to call one another on the phone, find out a little bit about each other, and make some simple plans together for that evening.

Requisitos: *Call your date (say the phone number out loud as you dial) *Greet your date and ask him or her a ***minimum*** of five questions about his or her physical characteristics and personality. *Your date will then in turn ask you five similar questions about yourself. *There should be a *minimum of ten different descriptive* words used in your entire conversation. *After you have both described yourselves, make plans to meet at the local pizza place or mall that evening. *Please make sure to have your entire dialog written out and ready to hand in after your presentation is completed.

Be creative and use your imagination! Include as many Spanish phrases and information as possible.

Presentación de Descripciones

Nombre _____

Clase _____ Fecha _____

Comentarios

	4	3	2	1
Content	**Complete**	**Generally complete**	**Somewhat complete**	**Incomplete**
	Speaker consistently uses the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.	Speaker usually uses the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.	Speaker sometimes uses the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.	Speaker uses few of the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.
Comprehension	**Total comprehension**	**General comprehension**	**Moderate comprehension**	**Little comprehension**
	Speaker understands all of what is said to him or her.	Speaker understands most of what is said to him or her.	Speaker understands some of what is said to him or her.	Speaker understands little of what is said to him or her.
Comprehensibility	**Comprehensible**	**Usually comprehensible**	**Sometimes comprehensible**	**Seldom comprehensible**
	Listener always understands what the speaker is trying to communicate.	Listener understands most of what the speaker is trying to communicate.	Listener understands less than half of what the speaker is trying to communicate.	Listener understands little of what the speaker is trying to communicate.
Accuracy	**Accurate**	**Usually accurate**	**Sometimes accurate**	**Seldom accurate**
	Speaker uses language correctly including grammar and word order.	Speaker usually uses language correctly including grammar and word order.	Speaker has some problems with language usage.	Speaker makes many errors in language usage.
Fluency	**Fluent**	**Moderately fluent**	**Somewhat fluent**	**Not fluent**
	Speaker speaks clearly without hesitation. Pronunciation and intonation sound natural.	Speaker has few problems with hesitation, pronunciation, and/or intonation.	Speaker has some problems with hesitation, pronunciation, and/or intonation.	Speaker hesitates frequently and struggles with pronunciation and intonation.

Props

Adapted from ¡Ven Conmigo! Adelante Alternative Assessment Guide (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1999, p. 3)

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*Nombre*_____
*Clase*___ *Fecha*_____

¡Vamos a un restaurante méxicano!

Con tu compañero(a), play the role of a camarero(a) (waiter/waitress) and a cliente (customer) que quiere pedir un plato méxicano.

Brainstorm:

- *Things you eat at a Mexican restaurant*
- *Things you say to a waiter/waitress*
- *Things the waiter/waitress might say to you*

Include the following:

- *Polite greetings/goodbyes*
- *Questions/answers about food (¿Con qué se hace... ¿Has probado... ¿Es picante?)*
- *Order a plato principal y postre*
- *Preterite (You ordered an item and waiter/waitress got the order wrong (Yo pedí.... Tú me serviste...) Use the verbs pedir and servir*
- *Say that you are missing a utencil(s)*
- *Expression of like or dislike (¡Qué asco! ¡Qué sabroso! or Me gusta...)*
- *Ask for the check; pay and leave*

Your presentation should be well thought out with appropriate props. It should last at least 4 minutes. Please be sure to re-read the rubric on the reverse side of this page. Each partner should have equal speaking time.

Presentación de Comida
(¡Vamos a comer!)

Nombre_____
Clase ____ Fecha _____

Comentarios

	4	3	2	1
Content	**Complete**	**Generally complete**	**Somewhat complete**	**Incomplete**
	Speaker consistently uses the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.	Speaker usually uses the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.	Speaker sometimes uses the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.	Speaker uses few of the appropriate functions and vocabulary necessary to communicate.
Comprehension	**Total comprehension**	**General comprehension**	**Moderate comprehension**	**Little comprehension**
	Speaker understands all of what is said to him or her.	Speaker understands most of what is said to him or her.	Speaker understands some of what is said to him or her.	Speaker understands little of what is said to him or her.
Comprehensibility	**Comprehensible**	**Usually comprehensible**	**Sometimes comprehensible**	**Seldom comprehensible**
	Listener always understands what the speaker is trying to communicate.	Listener understands most of what the speaker is trying to communicate.	Listener understands less than half of what the speaker is trying to communicate.	Listener understands little of what the speaker is trying to communicate.
Accuracy	**Accurate**	**Usually accurate**	**Sometimes accurate**	**Seldom accurate**
	Speaker uses language correctly including grammar and word order.	Speaker usually uses language correctly including grammar and word order.	Speaker has some problems with language usage.	Speaker makes many errors in language usage.
Fluency	**Fluent**	**Moderately fluent**	**Somewhat fluent**	**Not fluent**
	Speaker speaks clearly without hesitation. Pronunciation and intonation sound natural.	Speaker has few problems with hesitation, pronunciation, and/or intonation.	Speaker has some problems with hesitation, pronunciation, and/or intonation.	Speaker hesitates frequently and struggles with pronunciation and intonation.

Props

Adapted from ¡Ven Conmigo! Adelante Alternative Assessment Guide (Humbach, N.A. & Ozete, O., 1999, p. 3)

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